Chronicles of Rory Gilmore in Four Trimesters
by MidLifeWriter

Summary

Starts off where the revival ended. This is Rory's journey.

*5/20/17 Note: Added another chapter. Look for a new Chapter 12: Parental Aspirations.

*Note: I found there to be some narrative holes in the original version, so I am working to fill them in. I welcome your comments. Again, thanks to my fellow Rogan Fans who influenced theses changes. You gave me a lot to think about.

Notes

Thanks for reading!

Like many of you, Rory's journey and the ending of the revival left me in shock. I wasn't sure how to feel about it (Yes, I have way too much emotion invested in theses characters.) However, after reading interviews with ASP and reflecting on the happenings in the lives of people I know personally, Rory's arc made sense. Perfection is an illusion, life is messy.

This is a work in progress. I am my worst editor. Like I wrote in my previous work, I've been looking at this so much I can no longer see the forest through the trees, so please excuse any spelling, grammatical, or formatting errors.

Thank you in advance for any comments.
Enjoy!
Prologue

Chapter Summary

The events that brought Rory to the last four words.

Prologue

August 2015

Standing at the arrivals gate in at Heathrow Airport, Rory took inventory of all her belongings; suitcase, laptop bag, purse with all her essentials, passport, notebooks, wallet, cash and credit cards. She walked past the exit towards the crowd of people waiting for their arrivals. She scanned the scene until her eyes fell upon a man holding a placard with her name. 10 minutes later she was in the back of a car spiriting her away to her hotel. There waiting for her in the lobby was the purpose of her visit; Naomi Shropshire.

She had been pursuing the Naomi Shropshire angle for about six months. This year marked the twentieth anniversary where Britain made sweeping changes in laws regarding women and sexual assault, a legislation that was spearheaded by Naomi. The changes had a great influence on other changes that took place in other Western countries, including the US. Rory, believing that a Naomi story had teeth, pitched it to various publications, finally landing with The New Yorker, featuring Naomi for their Talk of the Town column. After 5 years of chasing stories, 5 years of freelance uncertainty, five years of rejections, Rory felt an assignment that may, at last, give her solid footing in the journalism world.

For the next four days, Rory spent every waking hour following Naomi. They had lunch with her colleagues, took a two night trip to her childhood home where Rory met and interviewed old friends, teachers, and neighbors. She hung out with her in the evenings drinking coffee laced with whiskey or bourbon. It was exhausting work, as Naomi was a force to be reckoned with. She had the energy of a tornado, and the determination of a bull, but Rory was glad to have her days filled because it was not only meaningful work, but was also an excuse to avoid another matter, or rather person who occupied the non-Naomi space in her brain.

That person being Logan Huntzberger.

The last time Rory saw Logan was two months ago in Hamburg. She was at the tail end of her two-week sojourn in Germany, a mix of business and pleasure with the first part spent as a family vacation with her father and sister, exploring Berlin and Hamburg. After they parted, Rory spent two more days in Hamburg at an environmental conference, where Naomi was the keynote speaker. Rory and Logan’s chance meeting happened in a café on what was supposed to be her last day in Hamburg; the connection only happened because New York flights were canceled due to inclement weather.

Their initial contact was surprising and awkward. Her last memory of him was the profound heartbreak she felt as he walked away from her after she turned down his marriage proposal. She thought about him often throughout the years; on good days she wished him well and hoped that he
was happy, while on bad days she wondered what life would be like if she had made a different decision and said yes to his proposal. She knew something’s about his life as the internet made everyone’s live public, especially someone in the media business.

She invited him to sit down and they caught up. The discomfort they felt at the onset of their meeting quickly faded, and the two of them fell back into the comfortable banter they once shared. His life went on, he was back working in the family business on his own terms, and he was engaged. He was happy, and she was happy for him. They ended up spending the day together, playing tourist, exploring the places that she missed when she toured the city with her father and sister. All the while they continued their reconnection, updating each other on relatives and mutual friends, debating issues of the day, reminiscing about college life, and exchanging stories about their lives. At the end of the evening, after more coffee, dinner and after dinner drinks, he dropped off at her hotel. Standing outside of the hotel, they exchanged contact information, promising to stay in touch. They gave each other a long affectionate hug, and on impulse, she kissed him on the cheek. Then, with a smile and a wave she turned and walked into her hotel, where once out of site she practically ran to the elevator and up to her room, where she closed the door, sat on the floor, and dissolved into tears.

Her reaction to their meeting made her hesitant to contact him again. Obviously, there were some unresolved feelings, but she could not pinpoint exactly what those feeling were. Was she still in love with him? Was she mourning the life that she could have had? Was this delayed reaction to their break-up that was so quick and had no real closure? She decided that she would not contact him as seeing him again would open old wounds that have long since healed. They both moved on, they were different people, so there was no point. However, the pull was there; the need to reach out, the curiosity of how his life would continue, the longing to connect and to be in his presence again. Maybe seeing him is what I need to do, she thought to herself. Maybe seeing him will help me resolve my feeling and get closure once and for all. It was safe after all, as he was engaged and she was seeing someone (albeit not seriously.)

Rory took solace in the fact that she probably couldn’t see him anyway as Naomi had every minute of the day booked. However, after a night out with Naomi of eating and drinking, plans changed. It started with Naomi canceling early morning on the last full day of her trip, “Dahling, so sorry, but I am feeling under the weather. I hate to cancel, but I don’t feel remotely human. Enjoy the free hotel room and play tourist for the day. I will be in touch.” said Naomi’s voicemail. At first, Rory looked at this as a good thing. She would find a place to write and dive into her article. She was here in London to work after all, not to play, and certainly not to hang out with ex-boyfriends. Yet, try as she might not to give in, she lost her resolve around lunch. Ok, she thought to herself. Just send a text. After all, it’s the last minute, he is probably busy or is out of town.

So she sent a text.

Hi, it’s Rory. I am in town for on assignment, wondering if you had time to grab of cup of coffee. I am here until tomorrow afternoon (4 pm flight.) No worries if you don’t have the time. I know it’s last minute.

After about five minutes she got an answer.

Coffee? You’re in England, it’s TEA! And just TEA? Are you free for dinner? I can show you the finer establishments of London cuisine. :)

What could she say? No? She couldn’t without looking foolish (at least that what she told herself.) She accepted, plans were made, and evening out with Logan was set. Looking at her wardrobe, Rory panicked. Nothing she brought seemed appropriate for a dinner with her ex, an ex who was engaged to a beautiful heiress who also happens to devote herself to saving the world. So instead of
working, Rory spent the afternoon shopping, looking for the perfect outfit that would say, “I’m doing great but I am still devastatingly attractive” in an effective yet subtle way.

They met at a café near his office. She was drinking her coffee when she saw him walking down the street. As he walked towards, she could not help but drink him in. He certainly had changed in the last eight years. While he always exuded confidence, now it seemed more mature and substantive and less arrogant. He seemed taller, was much more fit, and by far one of the most beautiful men she’s ever known. She stood up as he walked up to her. With a bright smile, he greeted her with a kiss on the cheek. After some polite chit-chat, they set off to dinner, during which Rory talked about her week with Naomi. She described her experience with Naomi and her excitement about the prospect of being published in the New Yorker and the possibilities of it leading to more. All the while she was talking, Logan paid close attention, smiling proudly at her as she recalled the week. “Work dork” Logan called her good-naturedly after she finished her account of her week in London. “Work dork dinner companion” Rory shot back.

From that point, the slight tentativeness between them broke and before they knew it, they again settled into the familiar comfort of old friends. While it had been two months since their last meeting, it seemed like two days. Dinner led to a long walk around Hyde Park where they stopped every now and then to take in various street huskers and other touristy sites. They eventually ended up at the bar of Rory’s hotel where they talked more and had after dinner drinks. Finally, around midnight, it was time to part. She walked Logan to the outside of the hotel entrance where he could hail a cab. “Thanks for a lovely evening.” She said to Logan, “It was great to see you again.”

“Yea” Logan replied, “Eight years of no contact and now, two meetings in two months. How lucky are we? Thanks for getting in touch.”

“Well, if I am in London again, or you’re back in the states, let’s make sure to get in touch again.”

“That would be great.”

Logan put his hands on her arms. They both leaned in for a hug. However, unlike the hug they had during their goodbye in Hamburg, this one went longer, getting tighter and tighter as the seconds passed. Rory felt Logan bury his face in her hair breathing her in, while she realized that her hand was stroking the hair at the back of his head. Finally, they broke their embrace, leaning their foreheads together, obviously trying to fight the wave of emotion sweeping over them. They next thing they knew they were kissing. When they parted they stood just looking at each other, holding each other’s arms, not wanting to let go. They knew that they were tied to other people; they knew that the right thing to do was to walk away and never contact each other again. But they didn’t, they couldn’t. Eight years, a lifetime of separate experiences, only to go full circle, back to the way they felt. After a moment she let go of him and took one step back, her left hand still holding his right. She looked at him, knowing that she had a decision to make. Let his hand go and you can walk away, no harm no foul, she told herself. Instead, she tightened her grip and took another step back, causing Logan to move a step forward with her. Before they took the next step Logan interjected, “Ace? Are you sure? I can go home.” He said, meaning a word while at the same time hoping she will want to continue.

Without saying a word, she stepped forward and kissed him again, then together they walked back to her hotel.

It was that moment, the moment that set her on the path to where she was today. A year and a half later, Rory could not help but play the events of that evening over and over again in her head. Why on Earth did I make that choice? she thought to herself as sat with her mother on the steps of the
gazebo, watching the sunrise over the Stars Hallow town square. If she had just walked away, she wouldn’t be in this predicament. But she didn’t and now she has a major decision to make. Seeing the look of worry and concern on her face, Lorelai asked what was wrong.

“Mom?” Rory asked tentatively.

“Yea?” Lorelai replied somewhat absentmindedly.

“I’m pregnant.”

Lorelai was stunned; for once she was at a loss for words.

“Mom? Say something.”

“That’s wonderful honey.” Lorelai heard herself say with a shocked smile, “That’s wonderful...”
First Trimester: Curveball

Chapter Summary

Rory and Lane discuss the state of Rory's life.

Curveball

It was the Tuesday morning after the wedding and Rory Gilmore was walking to Kim’s Antiques. With Mr. and Mrs. Kim out for the week at an antiques' conference, Lane felt it would be a good time to inventory and update their on-line catalog. Rory was more than happy to help her good friend with this task. As Rory walked from her childhood home to the Kim’s house, she thought about the hundreds upon thousands of time she transversed this route. She was grateful that it was permanently engrained in her muscle memory because today, if Rory were to rely on her mental memory, she probably would have gotten lost.

It has been a little over a week since she found out she was pregnant, and about 36 hours since she told her mother. While Rory was not 100% sure as to how Lorelai was going to react to her news, what she got was totally unexpected.

Other than, “Wonderful…that’s wonderful,” Lorelai has not said a word.

It was a shock. Rory told herself, And telling her wedding day was completely unfair. She needs time to process all the changes, after all becoming a wife and learning her daughter was pregnant in one day is a lot to process. So Rory gave her mother space. However now, 36 hours later, that space was quickly feeling like a wall.

Rory arrived at the store and walked in. “Lane?” she cried, “Lane I’m here!”

“In the kitchen!’ Lane replied, “Can you please make sure the “Closed” sign is intact?”

Rory examined the sign on the door:


This was planned a year ago and has nothing to do with the election.
Please check our website.
Have a Blessed Day.

Rory made her way to the kitchen where she found Lane on her laptop pouring over images and excel spreadsheets. “Good morning friend!” Lane cheerily greeted.

“Good morning friend!” Rory greeted in return then whispered, “Are you parents really gone?”
“Yes, they called and confirmed their safe arrival in Asheville last night.”

“Oh good,” Rory said, as she took a box of donuts out of her bag, “Chocolate covered custard with sprinkles, four of them in fact.”

“Awww, you complete me.”

The two friends sit down and dove into their donuts.

“So, are Luke and Lorelai suffering from post wedding let-down?”

“No, while they had fun, I think they’re also glad it’s over. Although, now they have to contend with the ‘it’s about time’ comments.”

“Yes, some of those stories at the reception got a bit uncomfortable.”

Rory laughed but then became distracted again, something that Lane saw right away.

“Are you ok? You have that 'something is bothering me' look about you.” Lane inquired.

“I have some news,” Rory said.

“What?”

“I’m pregnant.”

Lane was stunned, “What?!? Oh my God, are you sure?”

“Let’s see, I bought a 20 pack set of pregnancy tests at the dollar store, they are just as good as the expensive ones or so I read, btw. Used them all up within a week. So 20 positive pregnancy test over a seven day period = Yes, I am pregnant.”

“Ohhhhh” Lane exclaimed getting up to hug Rory, “Well tell me, how are feeling about this?”

“Mainly lost, confused, scared, stupid…”

“Stupid?”

“Yes, stupid! Lane! I am 33-years-old and Yale educated! I’ve known where babies come from since I was 11 when my mom showed me a pirated version of My Mom is Having Baby. I know where to get birth control. I should not have let this happen.”

“No one’s perfect, and well passion can make one sloppy. So, and I can’t believe I am having this totally Maury moment, but who’s the daddy?”

“Logan”

“Oh Rory…” Lane responded painfully.

“I know.”

“Wait, I thought you guys ended it during the summer?”

“Well you know Logan, he can’t just leave well enough alone. He came here in mid-October, just after my birthday, and made one last grand gesture. An evening a carousing and fun that ended up with a night in a New Hampshire bed and breakfast.”
“Is that where the money strewn around Doose’s came from?”

“…and the golf balls scattered across town.”

“Impressive.”

“I thought that was it. We had said our official goodbye. And now this.”

Rory got out of her chair and paced the kitchen. “I can’t believe this is happening!! What was I thinking getting involved with him?! He is engaged to be married! You even warned me about him.”

“Yea, that relationship was not one of your finest moments.”

“And I didn’t listen. What the hell is wrong with me?”

“Rory, you would not have listened to anyone. You were clearly on a path and no one was going to tell you otherwise.”

“I’m so stupid.”

“You’re human!”

“I’m an idiot.”

“Hey! That is my best friend you are talking about, and I refuse to let you disparage her like that. So stop it, now.”

“Yes mam.”

“Sit down and talk to me. You last saw Logan in mid-October so that puts you at how many weeks?”

“About four weeks.”

“I assume Lorelai knows?”

“Yes.”

“How’d she take it?”

“She said, ‘That’s wonderful!’”

“Oh good!”

“No Lane, that’s all she’s said. Not a peep out of her since. I have rendered Lorelai Gilmore speechless!”

“She’s processing. A lot of activity the last week.”

“I know.”

“I assume that Logan doesn’t know yet?”

“No, I haven’t told him yet, although I going to have to soon because the wedding is set for the first weekend in December.”

“Winter Wedding, really?”
“Christmas decorations.”

“Got it, they are pretty. So what are you going to do?”

“I don’t know. That’s one of the reasons why I haven’t told Logan because I do have options. One is running out quick, so I have to make a decision soon.”

“Yes, you do have options.”

“This changes everything. My life is a mess! Not only with my relationships but my career! I have no career. Groveling for assignments is not how I pictured my life at this point.”

“Whose life turned out the way they thought it would anyway? Name one person.”

“Gail McHenry. Remember she had a “plan”? She got married to that guy she met in college? They have kids and they are now living in Stamford.”

“You didn’t hear? Turns out that her husband has another family in New Jersey.”

“Oh”

“Paris! She set off to go to medical school, then she went to Law school, and now she has her own empire…”

“And she has two kids who, according to you, prefer their nanny and is going through a divorce.”

“My grandparents. They had a great life together.”

“Yes, except for that minor incident where their only daughter gets pregnant at 16. And your grandmother widowed at a still fairly young age, yes, that’s no problem at all.”

“So you are saying….”

“…that life pitches everyone curveballs! But that’s not a bad thing. Just means you have challenges. Keeps life interesting.”

Rory put her head down in frustration.

“Oh Lane, help me figure out what I should do. Should I go through with the pregnancy or not? Should I keep it if I do? Can I even do that if Logan is in the picture? What would you do?”

“Rory, you know I love you but I don’t think I am the best person to guide you through options.”

“Why?”

“Because I was raised Seventh Day Adventist? Remember I was the one who viscerally declared that I could not have sex before marriage? You think that idea was drilled into me, how do you think it would apply to unplanned pregnancies?”

“Oh...well…”

“No, no, let me clarify. I just know that, because I am me, I don’t feel like I can advise you in the way you need to be. However, while I am biased, but I will support you on any decision you would make and absolutely not judge you.”

“Thanks Lane.”
“This is definitely Lorelai territory.”

“If only she’ll speak to me! Ok, so tell me? How is it for you really? Being a mom? I remember you were not so keen on it at the beginning, but you seemed fine with it once the boys were born.”

“To be honest, my emotions about family life are rather complex,” Lane replied.

“How so?”

“I mean, you know. You know my life, my history. I was this repressed kid, living a double life. When Zach and I got married it was the first time I felt totally free, I was so looking forward to discovering what free and unencumbered Lane was. But then I found out I was pregnant and threw a wrench into that situation.”

“So are you saying that you regret your life?”

“No, not at all.”

Lane went silent gathering her thoughts.

“I am finding that life is weird. There are days that I get soo frustrated with the direction may life has taken. I mean, I see you jetting off, seeing the world, doing all these interesting things, pursuing your dream, while I am still here in Stars Hallow, married to a man who has to wear a tie to work and just started Lipitor, raising two boys who are developing a liking for Christian Rock. This is not the rock “n” roll life I dreamed of. I have those days where I seriously question the choices I made. Why didn’t I just leave home and wait table in New York? Why didn’t I follow Dave Rygalski to California? Why did I marry Zach in the first place? I mean I was so young! But then I sit back and think and ask would I trade what I have now for a different life? My answer is unequivocally, no, every single time. You know those time travel stories, where the main character is dissatisfied so they go back in time to make a different decision, and then come back to find that life is not only different but messed up as hell? That’s the scenario that always brings me back to reality. I wouldn’t trade Zach and the boys for anything. Those choices are what got me here. I can't change what happened in the past, but I can do what I can to influence my future. I didn't become a musician to become the next Beyonce, I became a musician because I love music. This is not the life that I pictured years ago, but you never know what will happen. I am still playing, I am still creating. Where ever that leads well, I am just focused on enjoying the ride. You, my dear Rory, were set on a path that has simply made an unexpected turn. Your life is not over. You can’t go back so you must do better moving forward. Easier said than done, I know.”

“Ok,” Rory said, fighting back the tears, “Thanks, Lane.”

Lane pulled a chair next to Rory and hugged her tightly, “Anytime, always.”

Rory wiped her face and took a deep breath, “I have to think about something else. Let’s do that inventory?”

“Sure, would you like something to drink?”

“Just water, I can get it.”

Rory got up for water, while Lane watched her with concern.
First Trimester: Full Freaking Circle

Chapter Summary

Rory, Lorelai, and Emily deal with the news of Rory's pregnancy. Their respective reactions are surprising.

Full Freaking Circle

Rory was going crazy. It has been a week since she told Lorelai her news and yet, not a peep out of her. The week had been fraught with missed connections. Rory would get up to find her mother already at work or would come home to either find her still at work, asleep or otherwise occupied. Whenever they were together, Luke was always there, making Lorelai too engrossed with the new husband to get in a word. But Rory was not having it anymore. There was processing and then there was avoidance, and Lorelai was defiantly avoiding. They could not go on like this, so Rory went to her.

It was the end of the day at the Dragonfly. Dinner was well under way and with the guest usually going off and do their own thing in the evenings, Lorelai had no place to run. Rory arrived and found her mother in her office. “Mom,” Rory said as she walked in the door, “are you ever going to talk to me?” Lorelai’s face washed over with a combination of resignation and dread. “Yes, but not here, let’s go home.”

The two made it home, walking in the door silently, carefully and slowly hanging their purses and jackets in the entrance before sitting down in the living room. After a few minutes of awkward silence, Lorelai spoke first. “I haven’t said anything to you because I don’t know how to say what I need to say.”

“Ok” replied Rory, “how about let’s just be honest. Let it all out. Raw emotion. Hit me with it.”

“But that’s the thing, the raw emotion is what is making me crazy.” After a minute or two of silence, Lorelai was finally able to form a thought. “Raw emotion. Ok, I’m angry. I’m angry at you. And the fact that I am angry at you makes me angry at me for being angry at you.”

“Yes, I can see”, responded Rory, “that’s some vicious cycle.”

“Who’s the father Rory? Is it Patrick?”

“Paul? No, it’s not Paul.”

“Well, unless you found someone new, or hooked up with Wookie Guy again, there’s only one person I can guess.”

“Yes, it’s Logan.”

“Does he know?”

“No”

“Is he still engaged?”
Lorelai started to pace the room. “This was not supposed to happen!” Lorelei shouted with a passion that felt like she had been keeping her emotions in for weeks. “This! Was! Not! Suppose! To! Happen! You were not supposed to get pregnant like this! You were supposed to be together, and ready, and with a guy who was not engaged to someone else! Your life was supposed to be Christiane Amanpour, NOT Tori Spelling!”

“Well, your situation was not exactly the Wonderful World of Disney.”

“Yes Rory, but I was young, oppressed, angry, lonely, and confused. I made many many immature choices at that age, but I was 16 and have an excuse. You’re 33 Rory. 33 with much more life experience under your belt than I did at 16. I understand you are not perfect Rory, but I would like to think that you are a person who learns from her mistakes. We’ve been down this road before remember, with Dean? It may have been understandable with it happening with Dean at age 19 but at 33?”

“Don’t you think I know that? Don’t you think I am kicking myself every day for the stupid choices I’ve been making lately? Do you think I want to be in this situation?”

As if she were thinking aloud Lorelai says, “This was not supposed to happen, you were supposed to have it better than me…”

“So you’re mad because my situation does not fulfill the goals of your “Master Plan” for my life? Well, hello Emily!”

“Don’t you bring my mother into this! This is a totally different situation! They tried to control me, I did everything I could to let you make your own way…”

“…And this is how I pay you back, right? My situation nullifies all your hard work, right?”

Again, awkward silence.

The alarm on Rory’s phone went off. “I was planning to go to Grandma’s tonight to help her inventory the house and to write. I think it’s best if we cool off. Talk tomorrow?”

“Yes” responded the deflated Lorelai.

With that Rory, turned and left the room leaving Lorelei angry, confused, and ashamed.

Morning time. Rory woke up to the sun shining in her eyes. Her room at the Gilmore house had been significantly stripped down from its glory days. Gone were the luxury ornate curtains, and carefully selected tchotchkes that accent the room. Now it was just the basics; bed, dresser, nightstands, and a comfy chair, all items that would soon be gone once the new owners took possession. The Gilmore house has been sold, it was the end of an era.

Rory arrived at the house the previous evening to find her grandmother going over the final list of items to be sold. Sentimental items had been inventoried and stored weeks before (her mother’s china, selected paintings and other art, the infamous gold leaf bar glasses, the chair she purchased as a new bride the week after she and Richard returned from their honeymoon…) Then there were the items that were to be sold or given away (basically everything from Richard’s mother.) Rory claimed her grandfather’s desk and chair, his books and other collections, as well as other items from his
study. Where she was going to put it she had no idea, but letting them go was not an option.

Rory departed her room and went down to the kitchen to find that Berta had put out a spread for breakfast. Today Emily was staging a “preview sale”, and a day dedicated to certain friends and associates so they could look at and buy items from the house before they went public. Rory’s goal today was to stay in the study, write, and stay out of the way. She was in no mood to make polite talk with her grandmother’s crowd.

With her decaf coffee and bagel with schmear in hand, Rory set off to work, however she couldn’t. Pieces of the conversation with Lorelai from the night before played over and over in her head. Before she knew it two hours had passed and all Rory had to show for it was a blank page and an empty coffee cup. Rory got up to get some water. On her way to the kitchen she found a gaggle of her grandmother’s associates in the dining room.

“Rory! So nice to see you! How are you?” Constance Betterman exclaimed.

“I’m doing well, so nice to see you ladies.” Rory replied.

“We read your Talk of the Town piece in The New Yorker! Bravo Rory, such an accomplishment!” one of the ladies whose name Rory could not remember for the life of her added.

“Well, thank you. I'm glad you enjoyed it.”

“It’s so sad that Emily has decided to move, so many memories in this house”

“Yes, it’s the end of an era. If you please excuse me, I am working in the study. I just need to get some water. You know, deadlines.”

“Well, of course, dear!”

Rory went to the kitchen. As she filled her a pitcher, she could not help but overhear the conversation in the other room.

“Well isn’t this a find? You know who would love this? Shira Huntzberger. She’s been collecting for years.”

“How is she doing? Has she come back to the world yet?”

“No, no one has seen nor heard from her. The poor dear, she was very disappointed, heartbroken in fact. She was so looking forward to that wedding, I mean from all I heard about it was going to be spectacular, the event of the year! All that planning, effort, money, and for what? For them to cancel at the last minute? What a waste.”

“Well, it’s better this way. Bravo for saving themselves a very messy and expensive divorce.”

“Still, it would have been a wonderful event. But to be honest, I didn’t think it would have worked anyway. I mean you know Logan’s reputation, he’s not the type to settle down.”

“I heard that she fell in love with her tennis instructor and ran off with her.”

Rory mind went blank. The wedding was off, the engagement had ended, Logan was now free.

An hour later, Emily knocked on the door of the study to find Rory sitting quietly in the dark. “You
know Rory,” Emily said after she chided her for sitting with the light off, “We still have electricity. We’re not out yet.”

“Sorry grandma, I have a lot on my mind and didn’t even notice.”

“You’ve been preoccupied since you got here. What’s going on?”

“It’s no big deal”

“Well, if it’s ‘no big deal’ then you can tell me, right? I have problems believing that this is ‘no big deal’ because a ‘no big deal’ problem usually does not render a person into a zombie like state. So tell me, what is going on?”

Rory could not hold it in any longer, “Grandma, I have something to tell you, please sit down.”

The worried Emily immediately sits, “Alright, I’m sitting.”

“Grandma, I’m pregnant.”

“Oh,” Emily responded. In that instant, Emily began to have an out of body experience. No longer was she there with Rory, but transported back 33+ years ago sitting in this very spot with Richard at her side, and the 4 months pregnant 16-year-old Lorelai sitting in front of her.

“I’m so sorry grandma. I know I am such as disappointment. I know I ruined everything.”

The words “ruined everything” knocked Emily back to the present. Emily looked at Rory and reminded herself that this was not her daughter, but her granddaughter. That this woman, this beautiful smart, and strong woman who she loved more than anything, was 33 and not 16.

“Rory, what was there to ruin?” Emily told her granddaughter assuringly. “Now, start from the beginning. Who is the father? Is it that man you’ve been seeing, what’s his name? Pearson?”

“Paul grandma. And no it’s not him.”

"Then who is it?"

"Logan Huntzberger."

For the next hour, Rory and Emily sat while Rory told her everything. She told Emily the story of how she and Logan reconnected, their ‘Vegas” arrangement, how that arrangement quickly fell apart. Rory also talked about her career, how her life seemed to be careening off a cliff, how confused she was.

“I miss grandpa,” Rory said, “He was always a strong base for me. I was feeling off balance before he died, but since then I’ve been completely untethered.”

“Yes, well death has the tendency to make bad things worse. So tell me Rory, what are you going to do? What does your mother have to say about this?”

“Nothing.”

“What do you mean nothing?” Emily asked incredulously

“I told mom about a week ago, and she reacted by avoiding the subject. We finally talked about it yesterday before I came here, but let’s just say she is not taking it very well.”
“Really.” Emily stated soberly.

“Yes, she’s really mad and upset. I can’t talk to her about this.”

It was early afternoon. Lorelai was cleaning her kitchen, specifically scrubbing the grout on the kitchen counter with a toothbrush. She was scrubbing hard as if she were taking her frustrations out on the grout. Her efforts were interrupted by the doorbell and an urgent knocking on the door. Lorelai saw that it was her mother. With a resigned sigh she opened the door. Emily walked in with determination and without invitation.

“I have to talk to you” Emily tersely told Lorelai

“Let me guess, Rory told you.” Replied Lorelai.

“She did, and I can’t believe it.”

“I know, what was she thinking?”

“Her?!? I’m talking about YOU. I can’t believe you! Shutting out your daughter at her time of need. You should be ashamed Lorelai Gilmore, honestly!”

“Excuse me? Rory is single, and pregnant by a man who is engaged and ***I*** am the one who is in trouble? I cannot win can I?”

“Lorelai, when your child is in trouble and needs counsel, you talk to them and not shut them out. I can’t believe I have to remind you of that!”

“Listen to them? Give them counsel? Who ARE you, Dr. Phil? I seem to remember when I was in this situation there was no listening to me, but telling me what to do.”

“Yes, but this situation is different!”

“How?!?”

“Because Rory is 33 NOT 16!! Because she is not a child living under your roof dependent on you for her basic care, but an adult who can make her own decisions. And she has to make decisions! Tell me Lorelai, how do you feel about her making those decisions without your input, hmm? “

“Pretty damn crappy!”

“Is should think so. She is confused and scared, and thanks to you and your attitude, now hurt and ashamed. I expected more from you. Your actions really surprise me.”

“Well, you’re not the only one.” Lorelai yelled as she sat down. “You think I like feeling this way? You think I like the way I am reacting? I don’t, but I can’t stop myself!!! I worked so hard so that Rory wouldn’t repeat my bizarre self-sabotaging patterns, and yet we are here! Full! Freaking! Circle!”

Emily sat down in the chair next to her. “Yes, I understand, which is why I am here. You didn’t want Rory to repeat your mistakes, well I don’t want you to repeat mine.”

Lorelai looked at Emily dumbfounded. My mother is admitting to a mistake, Lorelai thought to herself, mark the date and time.
“I have regrets Lorelai, deep regrets. After you took Rory and came to live here I couldn’t get out of bed for a month. In that time you know what I kept asking myself? What did I do? What did I do wrong? It’s awful to be rejected like that by your own child.”

“Oh mom, I’m sorry. I was angry and confused…”

“Yes, but I could have handled it better. It was my pride Lorelai, my damn pride and my anger at you for ruining “the plan”. Well you know where that line of thinking got me? Alienation from my daughter and itinerant and strained contact with my granddaughter. I missed so much Lorelai, your father and I missed so much. And now I see you repeating my mistakes. Say she decides to have this baby and raise it on her own. How would you feel about not being part of that? She won’t necessarily need you know. This baby is half Huntzberger meaning that her physical and financial needs are guaranteed. There will be no going to you for prep school tuition, no opportunity for you demand Friday night dinners.”

“Mom, I never knew you felt this way.”

“Well you do now.” the teary-eyed Emily responded. “There are times Lorelai that you have to aside yourself and your pride aside for the greater good. This is one of those times. Can you do that Lorelai? Can you?”

Later that evening, Rory drove up to the house to find Lorelai sitting on the front steps. As she parked the car she saw Lorelai quickly walking to her. Rory was barely out of the car before her mother took her and embraced her hard.

“I love you kid.”

“I love you too mom.”

The two started to cry and then started to laugh because they are both crying. Together they walked arm and arm into the house where they sat in the kitchen, bring out the pop tarts and leftovers and talked about their situation. It was a serious discussion, punctuated with some laughter and lots of tears. In the end, mother and daughter were one again.

"I'm so sorry kid." Lorelai said

"For what?” Rory is confused.

"I'm sorry that I didn't see what was going on. I could have guided you better."

"Mom, I wasn't exactly forthcoming about my life. You can't be there all the time. I am not 16 anymore."

"Still..."

"You're here now."

“So,” Lorelai said, “what is your decision about the pregnancy?”

“I don’t’ know,” said Rory, “there are so many factors.”

“This is not a logical decision Rory, this is about your gut. What does your gut say?”

‘I don’t know if I can trust my gut, I mean look where my gut has got me?”
“I disagree. From all you’ve told me, I don’t think you’ve been listening to your gut. I think fear, despair, and desperation have been drowning out your gut. I think you need to step back, take a deep breath and ask, what would Rory Gilmore, the clearheaded, forget about the rest of the world, honest and true, trust your gut Rory Gilmore do?”

“Rory Gilmore? Please come in.” Rory and Lorelai got up and followed the nurse into a procedure room. With Lorelai’s help, Rory changed into a gown and laid down on the exam bed. While the nurse took Rory’s vitals, another person was in the background fiddling around with instruments and machines.

I appreciate you seeing me on such short notice” she said to the other person in the room.

“Well, you’re lucky there was a cancellation today. Are you ready?”

“Yes.” Rory replied.

Lorelai took Rory’s hand, “It will be ok honey I promise.”

“Ok, I want to take a deep breath and exhale slowly. You will feel a little pressure.” Said the nurse.

Rory closed her eyes and breathed in and then exhaled. She jerked a bit feeling uncomfortable. She tried to ignore the beeping sound of medical monitors.

“Ok, just a few more seconds, ok…there.” said the OB

“Wow! look at that” Lorelai said in awe.

Rory opened her eyes to the sound of a steady beat and looked over at the monitor showing the picture of a little pulsating speck.

“There’s you baby’s heart.” the OB said, “Healthy and strong. I assume you want a printed copy?”

“Yes”, the teary-eyed Rory replied, “Yes I do.”

Later that afternoon Lorelai and Rory are at home in the kitchen, admiring the ultrasound image.

“Baby Dot.” Rory said

“The cutest baby dot ever! And so intelligent!” Lorelai added.

“How do you know that?”

“A grandmother know!”

“So is the baby going to call you grandma?”

“No, I was thinking something more regal. Queen Lorelai? Czarina Lorelai? Lorelai the Great. There so much to choose from!”

“Luckily we have time.”

Luke arrives home with bags in hand, visibly excited and nervous.
“So,” he asked, “how did it go?”

Lorelai gives him the ultrasound picture, “It’s a dot!”

“A healthy dot! The heartbeat was strong.” added Rory


“What’s wrong with these burgers?” Asked Lorelai

‘What do you mean?’ Answered Luke

“They're wrapped in green stuff, where are the buns?”

“I wrapped them in collard greens, it better for you. Folic acid for the baby.” Luke informed Lorelai

“And what are these? BAKED fries? Wait! They’re not even fries! They’re orange!”

“They’re sweet potato fries” They’re better for you!”

“Oh my God!”

“And what’s this?” Lorelai asked as she opened a bag full of medicine bottles.

“Those are pre-natal vitamins. I was at the store and I saw them. I thought Rory could use them. There were so many kinds, and I didn't know what to get, so I bought all of them. I can take them back. I just thought it would be helpful, no big deal.”

Luke took the bag and walked out of the kitchen slightly embarrassed, leaving Rory and Lorelai giggling.
Rory and Jess go to a reception honoring one of Rory’s college friends. There she gets an interesting offer and runs into someone unexpected.

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It was a clear and chilly December evening. The Christmas lights reflecting on the fresh blanket of snow gave the streets of Rittenhouse Square a warm and festive glow. Rory and Jess were walking briskly past the shops and restaurant, through the bustle of holiday revelers, on their way to a reception at Stotesbury Mansion. Rory’s invitation to this event came courtesy of her good friend from Yale, Olivia Phan. The reception was celebrating the publication of the book, *Public Art of Philadelphia: A Retrospective*. Olivia not only was one of the featured artists in the book, but she also wrote the forward.

Rory received the hand addressed invite a month ago. Attached to the invite was a post-it that read:

*Scuttlebutt says that you are back in the States for an extended period of time,

therefore there is NO EXCUSE for your absence!! Looking forward to seeing you! Love -O*

With all that had been happening in her life the past couple of months, the invitation was a welcome site. How nice it is, Rory thought during their brief walk, to be able to focus on something else for just one evening.

With the event being held in Philadelphia, Rory called Jess to invite him to be her plus one and, much to her surprise, he accepted. “This is a good chance for you to network, plus I can give you the scoop on all the local literary big wigs.” According to Jess, this was a “good” event; small enough not to attract the superstar riff-raft, yet significant enough that respected people would attend.

“Rooooory!” Olivia excitedly exclaimed as they entered the room. “It’s been forever!” Rory hugged Olivia and then introduced her to Jess, who hit it off immediately. Together Jess and Olivia gave Rory a detailed briefing of the night’s key players; who had a book deal in the works, whose work was being considered the next hot thing, who was discovered passed out drunk in the bargain section of the local used bookstore. Hor d'oeuvres and champagne are being passed and there was an open bar. It was indeed the festive evening that Rory needed.

“Please eat, drink, and be merry” insisted Olivia, “I was on my way to the bar when you came in. Can I get you something?”

“Oh, maybe a cranberry and club soda?” requested Rory.

“Keeping your wits about you tonight?” Jess inquired.

“Gotta stay sharp to keep up with the Literati.” She replied, looking the other way.
“So Rory,” Olivia asked when she returned with the drinks, “what are you up to these days? Any exciting assignments in the works?”

“Well as a matter a fact yes, I am writing a book.”

“Shut-up!”

“Yes, it’s a memoir of sorts about my mother and me. Jess is helping me with the getting it ready to shop around.”

Raising her martini in tribute to them, “Impressive…so this is taking up a lot of your time or are pretty much done with the bulk of the writing?”

“It is occupying a lot of mental space, but I am still working. I am editing our local paper, working on some freelance articles, and am looking to pitch some ideas for other work.”

“…so long story short you have nothing too pressing on your professional calendar?”

“No,” Rory says feeling a bit embarrassed, “nothing too pressing.”

“Ok! Hold on.” Rory and Jess were taken aback as Olivia hurriedly whipped out her phone to send a text. Thirty seconds later she grabbed Rory’s hand asking, “May I please speak with you in private? Do you mind Jess?”

“Not at all.” A curious Jess replied.

Olivia took Rory and headed towards the back corner of the room where waiting for them was Olivia’s husband, Moses Nguyen. The last time she, Olivia, and Moses were able to spend any significant time together was during their friend Lucy’s wedding weekend five years ago. Moses was a noted designer and founder of MN Designs a very influential New York-based design firm where Olivia also served as a creative consultant.

After making their greetings, Olivia and Moses got down to business. Moses began the conversation, “We were commissioned to do a project that is due to launch in September of next year.”

Moses explained, “It is a multimedia study on the intersection of politics and popular culture. We started this project a year and a half ago and, as you can imagine it has taken many twists and turns from our original ideas. It has been a very…Interesting project.”

“Unfortunately,” Olivia continued, “two days ago we suffered a major setback. A key member of our Content team had to go on leave because of some serious medical issues. It has put us in a bind because we have deadlines that are coming up and we need to fill the open position with someone who can just jump in and get in the mix right away…you know…someone who has journalistic and editing experience…someone who is familiar with the inner workings of American political culture…someone who is not ashamed to say that they have missed appointments and family gatherings because she was binging episodes of Buffy…”

“Wait!” exclaimed Rory, “are you offering me a job?”

“Well, you would have to meet with the team to see if it’s a good fit but if it worked out then yes, we would love for you to join us. If we went through traditional channels it would take us weeks, even months to find someone. It’s time we don’t have. We know your work, we know you. Please consider it?”

“Yes, of course!”
“We are convening a team meeting this coming Wednesday in New York. Can you make it then?”

“I will make the time.”

“Great! I’ll text you the details.” Olivia excitedly hugged Rory, who then left to tell Jess.

“That’s awesome!” Jess said when told the news, “Well, I don’t want to get my hopes up too high” Rory interjected, “I might not fit the bill.” “Oh, you’ll fit,” Jess replied proudly, “they would be lucky to have you. We must celebrate!”

Jess left Rory to get drinks so they could make a celebratory toast. In the meantime, Rory meandered her way to the nearest open table. Rory was so happy she bordered on giddy. Her first real professional connection in since the Naomi Shropshire fiasco; she felt good about this, really good as if she were meant to be at this exact place at this exact moment. “Kismet,” she thought.

It was at the exact moment that she saw him. Standing a few feet away engaged in a conversation with an older man in a suit, was Logan Huntzberger.

Rory had not seen Logan since they said goodbye in mid-October. Thanks to the gossip at floating around at her grandmother’s house, Rory learned that Logan and Odette ended their engagement. Reasons as to why are still unclear (“Of course, the boy is not the settling down type”, “I heard that she was really in love with her tennis instructor and ran off with her”) all she knew is that now he was single.

Rory was about to turn and walk away when Logan spotted her, “Rory!” he called. “Uh…hi” she greeted him uneasily when he arrived next to her. Logan gave her a polite but awkward kiss on the cheek.

“What are you doing here?” She nervously asked.

“The Huntzberger Group is a minority partner in the company that published this book. I’ve been wanting to immerse myself more in this aspect of the business, and well…since I decided to move back to the States, I thought this was the time to do it.”

“So…you’re living here?”

“Well, not here specifically; New York actually.”

“Oh…” Rory said with forced enthusiasm, “…welcome back!”

“So, I guess you heard about Odette and me?” he continued.

“Yes. I was at my grandmother’s a few weeks ago and some of her friends were there. It was the talk of the gathering. “

“Yea. Well, it wasn’t right, it just wasn’t right.”

Rory caught Logan’s gaze. He gave her a hopeful smile, which made her loose her footing. He caught her as she almost stumbled.

“Are you ok?”

“Wow, it just suddenly got really hot in here. Did they turn off the A/C?"

Looking at her quizzically, Logan replied, “It’s December…” He continued, “Look, I’ve been wanting to call you, but I needed to settle things with Odette first. Can we talk please?”
“Well, I can’t right now.”

“O-kay then later? Tomorrow? You name the time and place I’ll be there. Come on Ace…please?”

“Umm, yea. You know what, I’ll call you. I have to go.”

Rory left quickly, meeting Jess who was on the way to the table. “Can we go now?” she pleaded.

“What wrong?” Jess worriedly asked.

“I just have to get out of here.” Rory took off towards the coat check. Jess quickly put down the drinks and, as he turned to follow her, spotted the crestfallen Logan watching Rory as she made her exit.

Jess found Rory down the street sitting on a bench visibly shaken.

“What’s going on??” The now very worried Jess implored.

“Nothing…everything. Oh God, seeing him was the last thing I needed.”

“That’s that Logan guy, right? The guy you were seeing in at Yale?”

Rory nodded her head.

“What did he say to you? Was he harasssing you?”

“No, no, he wasn’t. We were talking and he brought some things up.”

“What did he say that upset you so much?”

“It’s a bit complicated.”

“How so?”

After a silent moment, “Jesss?” Rory asked cautiously.

“Rooory?” Jess replied, mimicking her tone.

“I’m about 10 weeks pregnant.”

“What?!”

She turns and looked at him.

“I’m about 10! week! Pregnant!”

“Wow, that’s…great? Congratulations?” Jess said, trying unsuccessfully to contain his shock.

“Yes, it is, and thank you.” She said disarmingly, “…Logan…”

“Is the father? I figured as much.” He interrupted, “How long were you together?”

“About a little over a year. We ended it in October. He doesn’t know yet.”

Jess sat down next to Rory, dumbfounded, “Wow…”

“Well, this wasn’t exactly planned and it’s been such a shock and I was seeing someone else, and he
was engaged…”

“Wait he was engaged?!”

“They broke up…”…Rory said dismissively, “The last few weeks has been so crazy…My mom and I went through this thing when I told her…”, with every word Rory became more panicked, “…we’re ok now, then I had to deal with my grandma, and then I had to decide what to do, then I had to find a doctor…”

“Rory!” Jess implored as he put his hand on her shoulders and turned her towards him, “Breath.”

Rory took a series of slow deep breath and calmed down.

“So?” asked Jess.

“So?” Rory replied.

“You’re going to be a mom. That’s incredible!”

“I’m going to be a mom.” She tearfully responded.

Jess smiled at her, gave her a kiss on the forehead, and put his arm around her. She laid her head on his shoulder. As the snow began to fall, they sat in silence.
Rory meets with Logan to break the news.

The next morning, while waiting for her train that would take her back home, Rory called Logan to arrange a meeting. *It's time*, she thought, *in fact way-way overdue*. He made himself available for the following day, picking a restaurant between New York and Stars Hallow. “Are you sure? I can come to you, no problem,” he offered. “No, half-way is better,” she assured him; she needed to be in neutral territory.

Rory arrived to find Logan sitting at the bar, on his phone scrolling through his e-mails. “There she is…Hi.” Logan greeted, sighing in relief and with a smile.

“Hi” she replied nervously.

“Thanks for meeting with me.”

“Thanks for wanting to be met.”

Logan and Rory were led to a private room at the back of the restaurant. There they found a table for two, set with the usual accoutrements and a small vase of flowers. Rory ordered a Pellegrino, while Logan a Mimosa. They looked through the menu and chit chatted about the food selection until the waitress returned with their drinks. Once the waitress left, Logan broke the ice. “So I hope you don’t mind that I got us a private room. I just didn’t want anyone privy to our conversation,” he said.

“No,” Rory said reassuringly, “not at all, privacy is nice.”

“Soos…how are you?”

“I’m fine. I’m good. Busy you know. I got some freelance work I am working on, oh and I may have a job. You remember Olivia from Yale? She was one of the featured artists Friday evening? Her husband is the Principle at a design firm. They are working on a project and we are exploring the possibility of me joining them.”

“That’s great!”

“Yes, it is! I’m meeting with their team this week to see if it’s a good fit.”

“I’m sure it will go well Ace. You fit in anywhere! And the book? Is that still happening?”

“Yes, I’ve written about seven chapters, about a quarter way through eight.”

“Where are you writing?”
“Well, I started at my grandparent’s house, specifically in grandpa’s study. But the house has been sold and they are closing in January so I am searching for a new place.”

“Well, you know the offer for the Maine house still stands.”

“I know, and again thank you, but it’s far away, and plus it just not the right place for me.”

“I understand.”

An awkward silence fell between them.

“So you and Odette?” Rory started again in a serious tone.

“Me and Odette…” Logan replied.

“Does she know about us?

“Yes, I told her.”

“And that’s why you decided to break up?” Rory asked with a bit of panic.

“Well…no,” replied Logan matter-a-factly, “Walking in on her and one her colleagues kissing in our kitchen was the starting point.”

“Oh Logan.”

“According to her, she met him about six months ago and it was instant. They were together for about two months, but then she broke off the relationship before she moved to London. He showed up and asked her to come back, and well,” he said with a semi-comically resigned look on his face, “she did.”

“I’m sorry Logan”

“Look,” he continued waving off her sympathy, “it really is alright. She’s not a monster. Admitting to ourselves and each other that fulfilling the “dynastic plan” was not the way we wanted to live was the best outcome for us. She was a little hurt but not fully surprised whenI told her about you and me.” Looking at Rory meaningfully Logan added, “It was the right thing to happen. Better now than 10-years down the line when we’re bitter and fighting over the kids and the wagon wheel coffee table. We both still love and respect each other very much, but in the end, it wasn’t right.”

More Silence

“Ace?” this time Logan breaking the silence, “Something’s going on in that head of yours?”

At this point, Rory’s frustration was evident, “It’s just so…”

Logan interrupted, “I’m just going to come out and say it. You inhabit my every thought. It takes so much energy just for me to function on a basic level since we last saw each other. Leaving you that morning absolutely gutted me. Even if Odette chose to go through with the wedding, I wouldn’t have.” Taking Rory’s hand in his, “You are for me Rory, you are it for me.”

Pulling her hands away, Rory pleaded, “Logan, stop.”

“I know the last year or so was not the best reflection of us. Regardless of what how Odette and I really felt about each other, lying and cheating on her was wrong, I know that. But I couldn’t help it because I love you. Please tell me you feel the same?”
“If you felt this way then why didn’t you say anything?”

“Because you rejected me before remember? Up until this past October, that day you turned down my marriage proposal was the worse day of my life! And remember, the Vegas agreement was your idea! I wanted to be with you so badly, so I held on to what I could.”

“So, I tell you I feel the same, then what?”

“Then we can finally be together. It’s meant to be Ace. We are meant to be!”

“Actually, our situation is a bit more complicated…”

“How? Either you love me or you don’t. Either you want to be with me or you don’t. Just tell me please, put me out of my misery.”

Rory became teary-eyed.

“Ace?”

“I’m pregnant Logan.”

Logan was stricken.

“Going on 10 weeks.”

Logan did the math in his head.

“And there’s been no one else?”

“No.”

“So that means?”

“Yes.”

Logan’s stricken look dissolved into a big smile. He got out of his seat and walked to Rory, wrapped his arms around her and kissed her head, making Rory very uncomfortable.

“Ace! “ Logan exclaimed, crouching down next to Rory, “We’re going to be parents!”

“Yes, that we will be,” Rory confirmed uneasily.

“How are you feeling? Have you been to the doctor yet?”

“Logan…”

Getting up to sit back down in his chair, Logan brainstormed, “There’s so much to do, like where are we going to live? I haven’t gotten a permanent place in the city yet, so we can…”

“LOGAN! Slowdown!”

“Yes, sorry.”

“Obviously, you’re not upset.”

“Why should I be upset? This seals it, this seals us.”
“I don’t know.”

Logan’s demeanor changed, “What do you mean, “I don’t know”?”

“Meaning I don’t know. Logan! I am single, pregnant, alone…”

“…you’re not alone…” he firmly interjected.

“I have no permanent home, no permanent job. I am pregnant with a child by a man with whom I had an illicit affair while he was engaged and I was seeing someone else! I mean who does that? I’m a walking telenovela!”

“Ace…”

“All I need now is my crazy long lost twin to appear declaring that she’s the one who is really pregnant and I just dreamed it all.”

“Will this twin write pro/con lists?”

“Do NOT mock me Logan!”

“Sorry, but the telenovela comparison is begging to be mocked.”

Rory started to cry.

“Ace…” Logan began apologetically.

“Logan, the past five years have been hard, really hard. Where I am now is not where I thought I would be when I graduated from Yale. Working on the Obama Campaign was great, but then the recession hit, journalism changed, and well, I feel like I have spent the last five years floundering and untethered. Every time I felt that I was getting somewhere, I got knocked back. And then we ran into each other in Hamburg…”

“Yes, you were wearing your lucky dress.”

“It was so good to see you. That day we spent wandering around Hamburg, talking and catching up…it was the first time in a long time that I felt happy and …safe. I had absolutely no intention of starting anything Logan, not one, especially after you told me about Odette. But then we saw each other again in London…” Rory hung her head in shame.

“Yes, I never forget that night. It was probably the happiest I felt in a long, long time.”

“I felt happy too, but I also felt unstable because I was still so unsure about my life. I worked so hard to reach this goal and it was all falling apart. Then you appeared and were so loving and safe, and I was seeing someone, and you were engaged…”

“…and thus the “Vegas” rule.”

“Yes, thus the Vegas rule.”

Awkward Silence

“So now what? You go on, have the baby and I get Christmas card with a picture once a year? Are you even happy about this? Are you considering not going through with the pregnancy?”

“Yes, Logan, I am happy about this and yes, I am planning on continuing the pregnancy, and
parenting, and everything that comes with it. I am absolutely sure about that. What I am not sure right now is me. I can’t go on living as recklessly as I have the past five years. What I need to do now is settle, regroup, stop chasing, and find a real direction. I need to figure out certain aspects of my life on my own.”

“And that includes how I fit into your life.”

“Yes…and no. I never for once thought you would not be involved. I know that you would never shirk your responsibility. The degree to which you want to be involved is up to you. However, I think you and I getting back together is not a good idea.

More silence.

Rory continued, "I know this is huge, and you have a lot to process so I should go. I’ll call you tomorrow?"

“Yes, call me tomorrow”, answered Logan, somewhat detached and looking at no one in particular.

“Ok,” said Rory as she stood up from her chair and gathered her belongings. Rory took an envelope from her bag and handed it to Logan, “Here, it’s a copy of the ultrasound image from my first appointment. The heartbeat was strong and healthy.”

Rory gave Logan’s shoulder a squeeze, and exited the room, leaving Logan sitting there staring at the envelope.

Later that night, back home in Stars Hallow. Rory and Lorelai were at the diner, helping Luke close up. “Oh, Mom” Rory recounted as she filled up salt shakers, “You should have seen the look on his face…”

“…when he realized that you were not going to pick up where you left off?” Lorelai finished.

“It was awful.” Rory lamented.

“So, what did he say about the baby?”

“He was excited when he thought that it meant that we would get back together, now I don’t know. I said I would call…”

Suddenly they heard a banging, they look to see Logan standing at the door.

Luke appears from the kitchen concerned and ready for a fight “What the hell…”

“Rory!” Logan yelled from behind the locked door, “Let me in, I need to talk to you.”

Rory opened the door, and Logan burst in.

“When did you find out?” He angrily asked.

“What?” Rory replied confused.

“When did you find out you were pregnant?”

“Late October.”
“So, late October, and I am only finding out about this today?!?!”

“I was dealing with a lot…”

When were you planning to tell me, Rory? Or were you ever going to tell me?????”

Clearly offended, Rory answered, “Of course I was going to tell you!”

“So when Rory? WHEN? I was engaged Rory, on the verge of getting married. If I hadn’t walked in on Odette then we would be on our honeymoon in New Zealand!”

“You said you didn’t want to marry her anyway.”

Logan, bursting with frustration, “That’s not the point! You waited this long to tell me?! AND the only reason why you did is because we ran into each other and forced the issue!! If I had not been at that party then when would you have told me huh? When were you on your way to the hospital to give birth? At the kid’s first birthday? When the kid got into a good prep school and you needed money for tuition?”

“Hey! I! SAID! I! WAS! PLANNING! TO! TELL! YOU!”

“Did the past year and a half really mean nothing to you at all? I was really just a distraction, a crutch?”

“NO! I mean, YES, it meant something to me, YOU mean something to me. I love and care about you so much, but right now I cannot concentrate on anything but this baby and getting myself together. Do you get that?”

Sighing with resignation, “Yes, I do.” Logan answered quietly.

Rory, matching his tone, “I always planned to tell you.”

“Yes, but on your own terms right? Everything on your terms right? I mean all that bullshit you said today about how I can be as involved or uninvolved, Do you really think I would abandon you? Do you really have that low opinion of me???”

“No, I BELIEVE that you would be there. I never once thought you would abandon me…”

“So what? You think that you can go and play super modern woman and raise this kid without my input…”

“No, not at all”

“Good, because I’m here to declare that that will not happen. I’m the father, I have rights!”

“Of course you do.”

Logan turned away, taking deep breaths, becoming visibly calmer, but on the verge of tears, which he hid from Rory. He couldn’t take it anymore.

With his back still to her, the dejected Logan asked, “So you have a doctor?”

“Yes.”

“You like and trust this doctor?”
“Yes, it’s the same doctor that delivered Lane and Zach’s twins.”

“When’s your next appointment?”

“Next month, on the 16th in the morning.”

“Ok, well I’ll be there. Text me the details?”

“Yes. For sure.”

“Good. See you then.”

With that, Logan left.

Rory slowly sat down and started to cry. Lorelai pulled up a chair and sat next to Rory and wrapped her arms around her. “Oh Mom,” cried Rory, “I suck!”

“Only at romantic relationships. Chip off the old block.” reassured her mother. Rory laughed and started to calm down. Lorelai let go of her daughter and walked to the kitchen to get her a glass of water. On the way she saw a box with a picture of a pregnant woman marked “Belly Bands”.

“Ah, Luke?” asked the curious Lorelai, “What is this?”

The embarrassed Luke quickly grabbed the box “oh, just something I picked up, thinking Rory could use it. It’s no big deal.”

He took the box and quickly walked upstairs.
Chapter Summary

As Rory journeys through her pregnancy, she experiences great triumphs and setbacks, both professional and personal. Also, how will her pregnancy affect other relationships?

The New and Improved Lorelai Part II

Seven in the morning and Rory was already up and working. With her standing doctors appointment set for 10:30 am she had three hours to get things done, and she was determined. Presently she was wading through a plethora of work e-mails that seemed to explode overnight. After the e-mails, she had copy to edit, a load of laundry to wash and dry, and then she had to pack for her trip to New York. The 6:30 pm train was her goal.

The last month brought Rory a whirlwind of changes that seemed to put at least her professional life on an upward trajectory. The meeting with Moses and the Content Team at his design firm went very well. So much so that the offer for the position came only an hour after the meeting. Breaking the news of her pregnancy scared her, “what if being pregnant causes them to reconsider?” she obsessed. Much to her relief Moses didn’t even bat an eye. “Lucky for you”, Moses explained, “Our work here is deadline driven. We don’t care where or when you do your work, as long as you get it in on time. So meet your deadlines, and keep your meetings and you’ll be ok. Plus” He added jokingly but serious, “it would be illegal for us to rescind the offer based on pregnancy anyway.”

She had only been on the job for about three weeks and she already felt at home. The subject matter, politics and popular culture, was right up her alley. She was juggling two projects at the moment, finishing up the follow-up work on the material that addressed events during the 2016 campaign, and a new look into the happenings of the election. The latter assignment meant setting up interviews with various players in the campaign, people in the entertainment and retail industries, as well as sociologists, political theorist, economist and other academics. What she liked best was that no two days were the same. There would be an interview with Lorne Michaels one day and Fredrick M. Hess on another. The work gave Rory the opportunity to reconnect with friends and professional contacts from the days covering the Obama campaign, many of whom she discovered, were having their struggles as well. It was exhilarating being in a room with like-minded people, researching and debating, writing and editing, and seeing her ideas come to life.

The Gazette also became a point of pride. Resistance to change by the staff, as well as seemingly arbitrary regulatory requirements imposed by Taylor made Rory’s efforts to bring The Gazette to the twenty-first century proved much more of a challenge than she had anticipated. Yet, she was steadfast in her resolve and her efforts paid off. Thanks to some equipment donations and some seed money from the small business association of the State of Connecticut, Rory was able to upgrade the computers. She tapped into the talents of the Thirty-Something Gang who used their talents to get a website up and running. The popularity of the poem inspired Rory to open the site for other contributions. With some help from Jess, Rory networked with the regional poetry/literary community, including the works of their member in the monthly publishing of the Gazette. This new avenue for expression brought in interest outside of Stars Hallow garnering advertisements on the website and paper and thus allowing the Gazette to generate a small profit, the first in over 20 years.
The income generated from advertising allowed for Rory to hire a part-time intern to take over the
day-to-day operations (another Thirty-Something Gang member who decided to go back to school
for his masters) while Rory retained the title of Managing Editor.

Then there was the book which, unfortunately with all that was going on, suffered. Rory had ten
chapters written. While she used her new job as the excuse, the real reason was that she had hit a
wall. “It seems funny that I am blocked about this story since it’s based on my life,” Rory lamented
to Jess at Christmas dinner.

“Why do you think you are blocked?” Jess asked, “Is it pregnancy stress?”

“No, in fact, it was during the stress that I wrote the most. It’s missing something, I just can’t quite
put my finger on it.”

“Well let me read what you have so far and maybe I can help.”

“No. No offense, but I think I need an outside opinion to look at it. You are part of the story, and I
need objectivity.”

“Fair enough. I can see if I can find someone who can give your manuscript a glance.”

"Thank you, that would be great."

In addition to the job success, Rory also found a new place to live. Finding it proved to be both a
happy accident and a negotiating coup. One day, overwhelmed by fatigue, Esther caught Rory
asleep at her desk when she returned back to work after lunch. ‘Why are you sleeping here when
you have the snooze nest upstairs?” she scolded as she opened the file cabinet.

“The snooze nest?”

“Yes, it was where Bernie used to take his afternoon naps.”

Rory went to the second floor of The Gazette building to find the skeleton of an efficiency apartment.
About 1000 square feet, it had a kitchenette (minus the appliances), and a small bathroom with a
missing wall, but enough room to carve out areas for a bed, sitting room, and an office space. The
room reminded her of the shed that she and Lorelai shared when they lived at the Independence Inn.
It was perfect.

Rory’s title property research found that the owner of the building was a holding company that could
be traced back to Taylor (“I did it for tax purposes. It’s all legal, albeit admittingly not entirely
ethical.”) With that leverage, along with her success with The Gazette, Rory was able to not only
convince Taylor to rent the space, but also negotiate a very favorable rental rate (plus water and heat
and brand new appliances.) Tom and Luke inspected the property determining that bones, electrical
and plumbing were solid. The day after Christmas, Luke and Jess proceeded to build a new wall
around Rory’s bathroom. Jess hung around town a bit longer and helped Rory put up blinds and
curtains, line her kitchen shelves with contact paper, clean up the floors and paint the walls. The
emptying of the Gilmore house gave Rory cookware (which she hardly used) a microwave,
mismatched dishes, glassware, and cutlery. Rory was also able to claim her bed, as well as linens,
and other miscellaneous household items. Best of all, with her first paycheck, she bought a brand
new sofa bed for her living room and was able to move her grandfather’s desk and chair and other
items from his study into her new office area. By the time the new year came around, Rory was all
moved in. “Why move out if you are not there half the time?” Lorelai sarcastically whined and she
carried boxes of books up the stairs to her Rory’s apartment. “I need a place of my own, Virginia
Wolf said it’s good for me.”
“Well if Virginia said it, it must be true! So please remind me of your schedule again??”

“I will be spending long weekends here, and mid-week in New York. I will leave for New York on Monday nights and return to Stars Hallow Thursday evening or Friday morning, depending on that I can get done.”

“And you’re really going to stay with pregnant Paris?”

“Yes, with her being due in a few weeks and with her and Doyle back together, Paris said she needs a buffer. Doyle’s hovering is making her crazy. Plus I 'balance out the nanny', according to her.”

“You’re such the modern busy woman. It’s a good thing you don’t cook or else we would never see you.”

“Well, I need to keep busy. Busy is what’s keeping me sane,”

It was true, Rory’s schedule was packed, but she liked it that way. Reflecting on her schedule she realized that she had almost every minute of her life filled with a task. Yet, she wasn't stressed about it as felt good to be working, and it also brought a welcome distraction from other matters in her life.
Second Trimester: Truce

Chapter Summary

Rory and Logan see each other for the first time since their confrontation at the diner. Can they work out their differences and come to an understanding?

Chapter Notes

Writing "fighting" Rory and Logan is great fun!

Truce

Reviewing her desk calendar Rory noted the date, January 16, 2017, or aka week #15, well into her second trimester. At this point, Rory was not only feeling, but also starting to look her pregnant state. All in all, it wasn’t so bad.

The immense exhaustion she felt in the first trimester had given way to a newfound energy. She considered herself fortunate that so far her pregnancy had been uneventful. She recalled Paris and her first pregnancy where she was perpetually nauseated and was seemingly throwing up every five seconds. Seeing that her first trimester was fraught with other stresses, Rory was thankful that her pregnancy was going smoothly thus far.

To stay on top of her quickly filling calendar, Rory set up standing appointments with her OB every third Monday of the month. Today’s doctor’s appointment was particularly worrisome, as it would mark this first time she would see Logan in over a month. Since their blow-up in the diner, communication between them had been restricted to “need-to-know” texts. How are you feeling? Anything new? Time and location of the appointment? How long will it take? All communications were short and right to the point, no dwelling or second guessing.

Rory arrived at the doctor’s office to find Logan already there and immersed in a parenting magazine. As she walked to him she saw that he was looking at baby gear, something she found that a bit endearing. “Hi”, she said as casual as possible. “Hello, yourself” Logan replied in a neutral tone.

“Been here long?”

“About 10 minutes. I thought it would bad to be late on the first day’, Logan said without looking up from the magazine.

Rory sat in the seat next to him “What are you looking at?” she asked.

“Baby gear. It’s amazing what it takes to raise a baby these days. You know that there are germ repellent seat covers for shopping carts?”

“Yes, I remember Paris received one after her son was born. She opened it and launched into a 20-
minute tirade on the benefits of germs and how our overly clean society is turning Americans into paranoid immune challenged zombie snowflakes. It was a really fun Bris!”

Logan smirked. “So are you clear on what is happening today?” Rory asked.

“Yes, you’re having your general check-up, blood work, and an ultrasound.”

“Have you given any thought as to whether or not you want to know the sex of the baby?”

“I’d like to know. I’d like to be prepared. I am kind of through with surprises for a while.”

“I hear ya.”

“And you?”

“I’m still deciding. It will probably be a curtain-time decision.”

“Ok, you’re choice.”

“Logan…”

Rory was interrupted by the nurse calling them in. As soon as they walked in Rory was handed a cup. She then headed to the bathroom while Logan went to the exam room. A minute or two later Rory joined him.

“What happened there?” Logan inquired.

“I have to pee in a cup every exam. Check for preeclampsia. We must escape the fate of Sybil Crawley.” Rory matter-a-factly replied.

Making a note in his head to research preeclampsia, Logan responded, “Yes, that would be good.”

The nurse took Rory’s weight (5 lbs. weight gain) and blood pressure (normal). “Everything looks good. So just change into your gown and the doctor will be in shortly.” After the nurse left Rory stood there contemplating the hospital gown and looking at Logan with some concern.

“What?” he asked.

“I have to change into this gown,” Rory replied.

“So?”

“Which means I have to take off my clothes.”

“And?”

“Well, you’re here. Can I please have some privacy?”

“Are you serious? Need I remind you that getting naked that got us into this situation in the first place.”

“Our circumstances have changed?”

“You know what? Fine. Let me know when you’re ready.”

Logan left in a huff.
Rory changed and laid down on the exam bed. She didn’t know why, but she always found exam beds weirdly comfortable. Rory was on the verge of falling asleep when she heard a knock on the door. After giving the all clear, Dr. Miller her OB and Logan walked in.

“Hi Dr. Miller, nice to see you again. I see you’ve met Logan.”

“Yes, we just got acquainted outside. Ok, shall we start?” Replied Dr. Miller.

Dr. Miller proceeded with the exam. They discussed how Rory’s feeling (I finally got my energy back), her diet (my stepfather refuses to serve me french fries and has been pureeing kale in my milkshakes). The three discussed testing and debated amnio vs. Marker Test (Marker Test; less evasive.)

“Any movement?”

“I feel some fluttering now and then.”

The look of frustration on Logan’s face was evident.

“Ok, so do you have any questions for me?” Dr. Miller continued.

“Yes,” Logan said, “so when is the due date?”

“July 8th. But remember that is an estimate it can happen before or after the date. This is one of those things one cannot predict.”

“Unless we decide to induce or have a C-section,” Rory interjected.

“Have you talked about that?” Dr. Miller responded.

Logan and Rory looked at each other uncomfortably.

“I am open to whatever you want to do, right up to delivery time.” Dr. Miller reassured them.

“So who is permitted to be at the birth? And will you be there?” Logan asked the doctor.

“That depends. We work on rotation here, so if I am not on call or am not available then one of my colleagues will attend the birth. We all have the same approach so I assure you no matter who you get you will have the best of care. As for who is permitted to be in the room well, of course, there will be Rory, the delivery team and me and after that, it depends on you. Some fathers want to be there, others wait outside. Some just want just the parents-to-be, other have invited the whole neighborhood. It’s up to you, just no video cameras please.”

“We still have to discuss the specifics,” Rory said.

“Sure,” said Dr. Miller, “Again, you have plenty of time.”

The exam ended and Logan and the doctor left the room to let Rory dress. Afterward, Rory and Logan proceeded to the ultrasound room. Logan helped Rory onto the exam bed and then sat down. The tension between them was palpable.

“Have you thought about whether you want to be in the room during the delivery?” Rory asked trying to ease the tension.

“Yes, I would like to be there.”
“My mom was planning to be there too. I mean if you don’t mind.”

“Sure, you are, after all, the one who is steering this ship.”

Rory became visibly irritated, “What is that suppose to mean?”

“What do you mean?” the equally irritated Logan responded.

“You have just been a total pill this entire morning.”

Logan reached exasperation. “I just meant that since you are the one who is going to be pushing a brand new human out of your body, that you should have control on who is spectating. That’s all.”

“Okaay.”

“Is there anything else?”

“No.”

“So, you’ve been feeling fluttering? You didn’t tell me that.”

“We haven’t exactly been chatty lately.”

“Well, that’s pretty important, you didn’t think to even mention it?”

“Honestly, I didn’t think that is was worth mentioning.”

“Well, I would like to know about things like that.”

“Sorry.”

“Yes, because we know this is all about you, your timeline…”

Rory looked at Logan incredulously, “Are you STILL upset about that? “

Logan, equally incredulous, “Yes! Would you have told me by now if we hadn’t run into each other, or would it have been Lorelai that is here with you right now?”

“Oh my God, you need to let it go!”

“You know you didn’t even apologize for waiting so long.”

Before Rory could respond the ultrasound tech arrived. Rory laid down and pulled up her shirt, revealing the early stages of a baby bump. The tech began the ultrasound.

“Ok…hold on…there!” The tech turned the monitor towards Rory and Logan who bewilderedly looked at the screen as the tech pointed out aspects of the ultrasound; the baby’s head, the torso, the arms, and legs. They saw and heard the heartbeat. At one point the baby turned its head, seemingly looking straight at them.

“So you want to know the sex?”

“No.” they both answered in unison and in awe. They looked at each other surprised.

“Ah, a couple that likes mystery.”

The ultrasound finished. The tech printed copies of the images and handed them to Logan while
Rory cleaned up. Rory and Logan thanked the tech and she left the room.

Logan looked at Rory, “Can I buy you lunch?” he asked in a conciliatory tone.

Rory looked at him and smiled.

About an hour later, Rory and Logan were sitting in a pub-type place eating burgers, and fries.

“Please don’t tell Luke I ate fries,” Rory playfully pleaded.

“I wouldn’t dream of it,” he answered smiling.

“What time do you have to be back to work?”

“I took the day off.”

“Really?”

“Big day Ace.”

After a few seconds of silence, Rory told Logan “I’m sorry.”

“No Rory…”

“No, let me finish. I’m sorry. You were right, I should have told you sooner. It was just such a shock when I found out. It took 20 positive tests over a span of a week until it finally sank in. And then my mom and Luke got married, and then I had to tell my mom, and well that didn’t go well.”

“What do you mean?”

“She has been really and supportive and wonderful, but it was a bit of a shock for her, and she initially didn’t take it well. She not only didn’t take it well, but she was mad at herself for not taking it well, and that became a vicious circle. To her, it was history repeating itself, and she kind of felt like she failed.”

“At what?”

“At being a parent. The one thing a parent does not want it to have their children repeat their mistakes.”

“Yea, but she was 16 with very little options. You are 33, with options and lots of support.”

“Yes, but still, the circumstances…”

“You DO know you have support right?”

“Yes, I do. Anyway, this does not excuse me waiting for so long. After our confrontation at the diner, I laid in bed that night with the scenario of you coming home from your honeymoon to the news that I was pregnant playing over and over in my head. Ugh, it was awful. That would have been a stellar way to start a marriage.”

“Well, knowing what we know now, it would seem that a surprise pregnancy resulting from a torrid affair would have been the least of our problems. But, thank you for your apology.”
“Thank you for accepting my apology. So have you told anyone?”

“How did she take it?”

“At first she was scared because she thought I was talking about Odette. Honor never really bonded with Odette. She always felt there was something not right about her and me.”

“You sister is insightful.”

“She knows me well. Anyway, initially she was scared because she thought I had gotten myself on a "Bridget-Tom-Giselle" triangle. She was highly relieved and excited when she found out it was you.”

“Well, I always liked her.”

“Yes, and she always liked you. She was kind of crushed when we broke up the first time.”

Rory looked away, a bit uncomfortable. She changed the subject, “When are you going to tell your parents?”

“Well, Mitchum is in Dallas this week and gets back tomorrow. Shira is at a spa and gets back the day after. Honor has arranged to have a “family dinner” Friday evening at her house. She figured if we double team them the initial fallout will be minimal.”

“You have a great sister.”

“She’s the best. So Ace, where are we?”

“In a pub eating junk food, hello?”

“No, I mean where are we relationship wise? How are we going about this? I accept that we are not together, I don’t like it, but respect where you are in terms of your life, but we are going to have to function if this co-parenting thing is going to work.”

“Yes, I know.”

“Can I call you? Can we Facetime? Because this only texting all the time leaves a lot to be desired.”

“Yes we can call, Facetime, e-mail, text, send smoke signals.”

“And your appointments are every third Monday?”

“Up until the last month, when they are once a week, and then every other day if we are overdue.”

“And you’re still ok with me being there?”

“Yes, but they are not that long, so it’s ok if you don’t make all of them.”

“Well, I will certainly try…”

“Thanks”

“Good. And if you ever need anything, just let me know.”

“Thanks. I will be sure to keep you apprised of flutters or any other news.”
“Good. So what are your plans? Now that Emily’s sold the house where are you going to work?”

“Well, I didn’t tell you, but I started the job at MN Designs. So I will actually be in the city three-four days a week.”

“Really? Congratulations!”

“Thanks! Yes, I’ve been doing this commute for about two weeks now. I’m staying with Paris and Doyle while I’m there.”

“Wait, I heard she was pregnant again and due any day now.”

“At the end of January. Doyle is being a bit obsessive this time around so I am kinda acting as a buffer between them.”

“Brave girl. And when you’re not in the city you’re staying with your mom and Luke?”

“No, I found an apartment! I am living in the space above The Gazette. It’s a great place. Good vibe. I’m glad to be in my own space. You should see it sometime.”

“I will make sure of it. So how is the book?”

“Good! I’ve written about 10 chapters. I’m feeling a bit blocked. Jess is seeing if he can get an editor friend to review it.”

“Jess?”

“Luke’s nephew, he was with me at Olivia’s reception? He’s is part owner of a press…”

“Yes, I remember Jess.”

“Oh, yes…well anyway, He’s also been talking to me about how to pitch the book. Hopefully, it will get picked up.”

“Well you know you have an “in” in the business”

“Yes, but I would rather use the channels I already have first.”

“Fair enough Ace. I’m sure it will be great. You’re a great writer.”

“Thanks for being my cheerleader.”

“Anytime! So, let’s toast.”

They both picked up their respective glasses of lemonade.

“Truce?”

“Truce.”

“To cooperation, co-parenting, and little baby Huntzberger.”

“Gilmore.”

“Gilmore-Huntzberger”

“Sounds good to me.”
They clinked their glasses. Next Logan took the ultrasound images out of this pocket and the two soon-to-be parents spent the next hour admiring the images of their baby.
Second Trimester: Career Girl

Chapter Summary

Rory is working for now, but what will the future bring and how will Mitchum Huntzberger fit into the picture?

Chapter Notes

SPOILER ALERT IF YOU DID NOT WATCH THE REVIVAL

Finally Chapter 8! Throughout this whole process, I always had Paris pregnant along with Rory (if you watched the revival it was hinted that Paris was pregnant during her meltdown in Spring.) I did not note that in the previous chapters. This and other minor fixes are planned for the upcoming days. Again, please excuse any errors and I look forward to any comments.

Thanks for reading!

Career Girl

“No, you’re WRONG! That argument was based on fake news.”

“No, you just don’t know sound research when you read it!”

“You cannot talk about the current political climate without acknowledging the legitimacy of the fear and concern that brought this about.”

“Well, you also cannot talk about the current political climate without talking about what that fear and oppressive climate it has produced!”

“You’re an idiot!”

“You’re an idiot!”

A typical day at work. Rory was in the conference room of MN Designs, gathering her materials to take her leave. The content and design teams just finished their bi-weekly status meeting and, as with every other meeting, her two colleagues Helen (of the content team) and Frank (of the design team) broke out into what have become their customary post-status meeting argument. Nevermind that all the issues had been settled and a plan had been set, nevermind that they both enthusiastically endorsed the plan. Arguing, it seemed, was part of their creative process.

“It was when they started calling each other idiots that I had to leave,” Rory told Logan as she passed him a napkin.
“Really? I would think that when it would start getting good!” replied Logan.

Logan and Rory were at a neighborhood pizza shop eating a quick lunch. Meeting for a meal at least twice a week had become their weekly ritual. While their schedules sometimes also allow for an afternoon coffee or extra lunch or dinner, and maybe an occasional walk, the minimum twice a week meal was an occasion that so far had not been missed.

“They launched into argument mode the second the meeting was over. All the while I’m thinking, ‘you know this was settled. You know that both your concerns and ideas are being addressed in the way that you want it.’ I swear, I think they just argue just to argue.

“So they are reflecting the media/public discourse of today?”

“It’s like working with Bill Maher and Ann Coulter, only without the sexual tension.”

“Ouch! So but the job is still fun right?”

“Oh yes, loads of fun.” Rory said with a smile, “I’m going to miss it when it’s over.”

The deadline for all content and design has been set for June 2, five weeks before Rory’s due date. While she was grateful that the work would be wrapped up in time for the birth of her baby, part of her was also sad that the job would be over. This was the first time in a very long time that she was excited about her work.

“Do you think they would take you on permanently?” Logan asked.

“I’m not sure. It all depends on the projects that are coming down the pipeline, plus the need for personnel. Remember, I am just filling in for someone who is on medical leave. I can’t take a job that isn’t available.”

“You’ll find something,” Logan assured her.

“Yes, one day at a time.”

“I can’t make it for lunch next week.”

“Why not?”

“I’m going London. When I left I transitioned some work to a colleague. They are nearing the end of the project and need me to tie up some loose ends. Also, since I am there, I am taking a side trip to Paris to meet up with Odette.”

“Really? Why so?”

“We have some loose ends to tie up as well. Legal and property stuff, nothing too complicated. I could just let the lawyers handle it, but I felt this was something I needed to do in person.”

“Have you talked to her?”

“Yes, we had a good talk the other day when I called her to confirm the meeting.”

“So how is she?”

“She’s doing well. She and Benoit, that’s her fiancée, are getting married in May.”

‘Wow, that was fast.”
“Well, when you know you know, right?”

“I guess so. Does she know about the baby?”

“Yes. She said that while it’s a little weird she is genuinely happy for us.”

“That’s nice.”

“Oh, my mom wants to get in touch with you.”

“Why?”

“Apparently, she wants to throw us a baby shower. I was hesitant about it a first but Honor said that she would help reign her in. I said that if you were ok with it, then I would be ok.”

“Well, thanks for placing the responsibility on me!” Rory said sarcastically.

“Sorry,” Logan responded sheepishly.

“So what are our chances of getting out of this?”

“I would say zero. Find a free weekend Ace.”

“Well, this is a sign that they’ve calmed down.”

“Yes, they accepted our situation and I have to say, they are kind of excited. They may not have been the most enthusiastic parents, but they are over the top grandparents. Honor’s kids absolutely love them. They still don’t understand why we are not getting married, though,” Logan added cautiously.

“One event at a time,” Rory responded.

“That’s what I said.” Logan replied.

The thought of Logan meeting up with Odette lingered in Rory’s mind for the rest of the week. She was feeling uneasy about it, but not really sure why.

“You’re still in love with him”, opined Paris one evening during dinner.

“No, that’s not it. It’s not a “stay away from my man” kinda feeling. It’s more of a fear.”

“Fear? Really? Of what?”

“Fear that he may not want to come back. Things have been going well between us, and we have a plan moving forward. I just don’t want that messed up.”

“Yes, that and you are still in love with him.”

"Will you still stop saying that? Yes, I "love" him, but I can't say I am "in love" him."

"Ok, sure, keep telling yourself that sister."

Just as Paris finished her thought, her baby started crying. Without batting an eye, Paris got up, picked up the baby from the rocker, sat back down, pulled up her shirt and started breastfeeding while spooning vegetables onto her other daughter’s plate. She continued, “...And you know, he is
“just waiting for you to give him the green light to make an honest woman out of you. That boy has it for you bad.”

“I am not in the position to think about that right now,” Rory responded, marveling at Paris’ multitasking skills.

“Yes but you know that I’m right.”

“No, I don't know that.”

The next day Rory was sitting in her office editing copy when a knock came on her office door. “Rory,” her colleague said, “There’s a Mr. Huntzberger here to see you.”

Rory looked up expecting Logan to walk in the door; only it wasn’t Logan, but Mitchum Huntzberger.

“Rory!” Mitchum exclaimed as he walked in and sat down uninvited, “Sorry to just drop in on you like this. I hope I’m not interrupting something important.”

“Not at all, nice to see you Mr. Huntzberger.”

“Rory, you are pregnant with my grandchild. I think it would be ok for you to call me Mitchum.”

“Ok, well thank you, Mitchum.” Calling him by his first name felt really strange.

“So, how’s it going? I am hearing great stuff about this project of yours. I am excited for the debut.”

“Well, it should be up and running by September. I will be sure that you are on the guest list for the opening.”

“Thank you, I look forward to it. I don’t want to take up too much of your time so I’ll get right to the point. What are your plans for after the baby is born?”

“Can you please be more specific?”

“Where do you plan to live? Do you have a job lined up?”

“Right now, I am planning to live in Stars Hallow. That’s where my support is.”

“And as for employment prospects?”

“Other than my responsibilities with our local paper, nothing as of yet.”

“Well, I have an idea to pitch to you.”

“Oh, ok”

“There is an opportunity that I think would be up your alley that is opening up in the PR Team at the headquarters of The Huntzberger Group. It’s specifically in external communications. You would be dealing with the media, government, and other corporate partners. There is lots of writing, not Talk of the Town pieces, but you would be one of the faces of the businesses if you’re up for it.”

“Thank you for the offer Mr., Huntz…Mitchum, but I am a bit confused,”
“About what?”

“Confused as to why you would offer this to me. I have zero experience in PR and there are probably hundreds of other people who are more qualified than me to take this job.”

“Yes, well I’ve seen your work. I know you can organize events, you know how to deal with people on various levels, and you can write. Yes, I admit, you are a bit raw, but you also learn fast.”

“Really?! Why do I have the feeling that there is more to this offer?”

“You mean that I have another agenda? Yes, I do have ulterior motives.“

“And those are?”

“Easy, this is also for my son and my grandchild.”

“Can you elaborate?”

“Sure! For whatever reason, it looks like you and Logan are not getting married. His mother and I don’t understand why, but the situation is what it is and we, ever so reluctantly, accept that. I do know about you and your work history. You do good work, but you have not been exactly steady job wise. Freelancing is brutal. It can be invigorating and exciting for someone who has no attachments, but that is not exactly your situation anymore now is it? I want my grandchild to have stability, I want my son to be able to see his child more than just on the weekends. You working a regular job is key to that future. You could take this job, move to the city, and have a viable family life. We can even arrange for you to live in corporate housing.”

“Of course you can” Rory respond with a bit of sarcasm, which Mitchum picks up on.

“ You know my reputation. I am not offering this to you willy-nilly. I am telling the truth when I say I think you can handle this. If I didn’t, I wouldn’t be making this offer. I just feel that taking this avenue solves many issues.”

“Does Logan know about this?”

“No, I went to you first. If I ran this by him, he would accuse me of interfering, which I am, but I do it out of love and concern.”

"I promise to think about it."  

"That’s what I was hoping you would say. Take your time. I wouldn’t expect you to start until after the baby is born anyway.”

Mitchum got up to leave, “Thank you for hearing me out Rory.”

“No, thank you Mr. Huntz…I mean Mitchum, for making me the offer.”

Mitchum exited, leaving Rory with yet another thing to think about.
Second Trimester: Gilmore Girls Time Out

Chapter Summary

A weekend in New York with Lorelai and friends reveals many unsaid thoughts and feeling.

Chapter Notes

This chapter is in part a tribute to Lane. I started watching Gilmore Girls because of her. I was upset at her arc during the original series and wished she had more airtime during the revival. This is her "success" story.

Gilmore Girls Time Out

It was 8 pm Friday night. Rory and Lorelai were in a hotel suite getting ready for a night out. Rory, sporting a small but noticeable baby bump, was dressed stylishly in a colorfully patterned red wrap dress and heeled boots. "That’s so not fair," said Lorelai when she saw her daughter, "maternity clothes are so much cuter these days. When that become a thing? In my day all we had were moo moos, sailor outfits, or your father’s sweats.”

“Well, you could get pregnant too.”

“Or maybe I can just get one of those costume baby bumps that they use on TV shows!”

“That’s an awful lot of effort for clothes you can successfully wear without being pregnant. Besides, you look nice also.”

“Really? Not too old? I don’t want to be one of ‘those’ women who dress inappropriately, looking like their trying to hard to hang on to their youth.”

“What? And going to a club in New York on a Friday night with your daughter and her friends is not hanging onto your youth?”

‘Yes, it is, but this is a special occasion.”

Indeed it was. Tonight Hep Alien was playing the legendary Bitter End club, one of the music business’ most sought after and influential venues. Many well-known musicians and artist have played this club and tonight Hep Alien was joining their ranks.

It had been quite a journey for them. Juggling the responsibilities of the band and everyday family life proved to be a great challenge. While other bands would have given up, Hep Alien soldiered on. Although Zach’s tour with The VapoRubs brought much momentum and interest, they could not take full advantage because the twins were so little. So they pulled back, and Lane, Zach, Gill,
and Brian went on with their lives, immersing themselves in the daily profound (but mundane) while still practicing and playing gigs as time permitted. Yes, playing pop-up gigs at the Secret Bar, street fairs, and open-mic nights when time permitted was not the rock-n-roll dream, but at least they were playing, and to them, that was good for now.

Fortunes turned in July 2016 when Gill received a call from a buddy who worked as a sound engineer. He had a job for a street festival in Providence and one of the bands backed out at the last minute, so he asked if Hep Alien could fill in. That evening, the haphazardly packed Hep Alien VW bus pulled up to the concert venue where their set received an overwhelmingly positive response, garnering the interest of one particular person, a woman named Eve. Eve happened to be the sister of a Nashville musician who was looking for material to fill in an album that he was working on, and one of Hep Alien’s original songs rang true to her. She sent him a video of their performance, and he immediately got in touch with his producer to work out a plan for possible collaboration.

“And you know who that producer is!?!?!?!” Lane excitedly asked Rory after she broke the news.

‘Who?”

“Jack White!”

“Noooooo!”

“YEEEEESSSSSS!”

“THE Jack White? The ex-husband of Meg? Founding member of The Raconteurs? Duets with Loretta Lynn and worked with Beyonce, Jack White?”

“The one and only!!! You may have to make more room for my kids in that apartment because I am dying, dying with excitement!!”

“Lane, you can’t die. If you do, who’s going to work with Jack White?”

“You’re right, you’re right….Oh My God!!!!!!!”

The collaboration with Jack led to a number of lucrative introductions. Soon Hep Alien and its members found themselves with not only a small loyal following but also being tapped for session work, songwriting, and other collaborations. “We’re not playing stadiums, but are working and creating which really is at the core of what we wanted to do,” Gill stated during a recent interview with Guitar Magazine.

It was indeed a great night for friends. Not only were Rory and Lorelai attending the show, but also Luke, Jackson, and Sookie. April and a group of friends traveled from Boston, and Jess came in from Philly as well. Christopher, looking for a night, out decided to tag along, with Olivia and Moses, and Logan, Colin, and Finn topping off the guest list.

The show went off without hitch with the band doing three encores. It was truly a triumph. Afterward, the group, along with other friends and special guests, gathered at a nearby pub in the neighborhood, bought out for the night by Logan.

As Rory sat back and drank in the scene at the after party she couldn’t help but giggle at the confluence people gathered in one room. At one table was Logan, Colin, and Finn, with Christopher drinking scotch and no doubt swapping boarding/prep school war stories. At another were Sookie and Jackson having a lively discussion about farming and landscape design with Olivia and Moses, while Jess and Luke were huddled in a corner quietly catching up. Then there was Lorelai, with April and her grad school friends on the dance floor moving and shaking like she was one them.
“Desperately holding on to her youth indeed,” Rory thought with a slight laugh at the site of her mother. Rory then joined them.

“Logan, thank you,” Lane said to him as she and the rest of the band mixed and mingled with their guests, “This is amazing.”

“Yea man, thanks, I can’t think of a more perfect night,” added Zach.

“No need to thank me, this is my pleasure”, replied Logan, “when you make it big I will be able to say that I knew them when.’”

“Yes, it’s a really nice set up here, really nice, a good time for everyone.” Logan heard someone say as Lane and Zach departed to take a picture with some fans.

Logan turned to find Jess standing behind him. “Yes, and are you having a good time?” Logan guardedly responded.

“Oh yes, the best. So I didn’t know that you knew the band that well. When did you become best friends?”

“Well, were not exactly best friends, but Lane is Rory’s oldest friend and the Godmother to her boys so in a way that makes her family.”

“Wow, so generous of you to do this for family-like people.”

“Well, she and Zach have been a great support to Rory, and well I am grateful for their help.”

“So you need help with Rory?”

“I’m just saying that since I am not there all the time, it’s nice to know that she has support.”

“Oh, yes, because she needs to be supervised.”

“I didn’t say that now did I?”

“No that’s not what you said. If there is anyone who can make it on her own is Rory, she can take care of herself.”

“I know that she can take care of herself. We were together for a long time, even lived together, so I am very well aware of Rory. In fact, I can say that I know her in ways other people wouldn’t understand.”

“Really now?”

“Really.”

Suddenly, Christopher, Lorelai, and Luke showed up at their side.

“Hey, guys what’s going on?” Lorelei asked.

“Just having a friendly conversation,” Jess responded without taking his eyes off of Logan.

“Getting reacquainted,” Logan added, matching Jess’ tone and manner.

“That’s great.” Christopher interjected, “Hey Logan,” Christopher continued while looking at Luke and Lorelai meaningfully, “What is that brand scotch you were telling me about? I think they might
“Sure,” Logan said. Christopher put his arm on Logan’s shoulder and led him away.

“Hey,” Luke said to Jess after they walked away, “what was that all about?”

“Nothing. Just getting reacquainted with Daddy Warbucks there.”

“Is that all?”

“Yes, that’s all.”

“You should have seen the two of them.” Lorelai reported to Sookie the next day, “It’s not like they were threatening each other outright, but it was that overly friendly, overly polite passive-aggressive tone, you know? Like at any minute they were going to pound each other. I felt like if Rory were a fire hydrant they would be peeing all over her”

“Eww, please use another metaphor, now that visual will be permanently etched in my head!” Sookie replied cringing.

“Sorry. It was just weird. I know that Logan has feelings for Rory, I mean they are having a baby together for Christ sake, but Jess? I thought he was over it by now, but I guess not.

Lorelai and Sookie joined Rory, Lane, and Paris in the mud bath room. It’s early afternoon on the Sunday after the Hep Alien concert. Lorelai, Sookie, Rory, Lane, and Paris are at Spa Tahanan, “researching” their offerings for the Dragon Fly Annex. Michele, who networked with the owner when he and Fredrick visited the spa the previous month, arranged the day. Tahanan was looking to expand, so Lorelai and Sookie were currently negotiating the possibilities of them operating an independent satellite spa at the Dragon Fly annex.

They started with facials, followed by a rain and steam shower. Next, Paris talked them into a cupping session ("I used to think this Eastern Medicine stuff was bunk, but I was wrong. Yes, it is possible.") and massage, followed by the requisite mani -pedi.

“Thank you Lorelai for inviting me to this outing.” Paris said when they sat down for their mani-pedi.

“You’re welcome. I’m glad you could join us.”

“So am I. I was climbing the walls at home. If I didn’t get out today I think I would have strangled Doyle.”

“What’s going on with Doyle?” Sookie asked.

“He’s been a bit over the top, hovering like the worst helicopter parent ever. I guess that’s what happens when you are on the brink of divorce only to find that your one last fling results in a pregnancy. Know what I mean Rory?” Paris said.

“Ha, Ha” answered Rory sarcastically.

“Was he like this with the first two kids?” Lane asked.

“No, he was pretty Zen about the last two. I was the one who was crazy. I think the combination of the almost divorce and the surprise pregnancy has freaked him out. He wants everything to be
absolutely perfect, and it's making me batty.”

“It’s sweet, though.” Sookie added.

“Yes, it is. Really I shouldn’t be complaining, there are women out there who can’t get their man to wash a bottle, much less do any heavy lifting when it comes to kids.”

“Or,” Lorelai interjected, “there is no man or partner and are doing everything alone.”

“Yes,” Sookie agreed, “I don’t know what I would have done without Jackson. He was great after I had our kids. But he came from a big family so everything came naturally to him.”

“Zach was somewhat clueless,” Lane added, “but he was a fast learner. He read everything he could before the boys were born. Between that and my mom, he did really well. What he lacked in skill, he made up for in enthusiasm. My mother calls his parenting skills her greatest accomplishment.”

“It will be interesting to see how Luke is with your kid.” Lorelai said to Rory, “He doesn’t overtly show it, but he’s excited. He was pretty good with you.”

“He wasn’t around when I was a baby.”

“Yes, but he was pretty hands once he entered into our lives. Thinking about it now, he was there feeding you, he helped care for you when you were sick. Remember, he helped you move into Yale? He was there as much as he could be.”

“So how about Logan?” Sookie inquired, “Does he seem like he’s ready to dive in?”

“Yes, he’s very into the whole fatherhood thing. He’s been to every appointment, we’ve been communicating about the pregnancy, he’s even teaching himself baby sign language.” informed Rory

“Aww, that’s sweet. So what are your plans after the baby is born?”

“Well, The Huntzberger Group grants six weeks paternity leave.”

“Six week? Wow, well that’s progressive!” Paris said.

Rory continued, “Surprising, isn’t it? Logan says he plans to take it plus two more weeks unpaid leave. I think we will hang out in Stars Hallow for most of it, but depending on how we are after the birth, we might commute between there and New York. We haven’t worked anything beyond the summer.”

What to do beyond the summer? That was the question weighing on Rory’s mind later that night as she stared out her hotel suite window. After the spa and a nice dinner, Paris returned home while Lorelai, Sookie, Lane, and Rory settled back in the hotel. Lorelai, Sookie, and Lane opted to turn in early so they could get up for the early train back to Stars Hallow, leaving Rory alone with her thoughts.

“Hey kid,” Lorelai sleepily said walking out of the bedroom, “can’t sleep?”

“No.” Rory replied, “I still decompressing from the day.”

“Honey, we spent the day at a spa, if you are not decompressed from that experience then something serious is going on."
“The reality of this situation is really dawning on me. That conversation at the spa today made me realize even more that Logan and I co-parenting will be a bit more complex than I thought. I’m going to have to move to New York to make this work because him commuting 4 hours a day to and from Stars Hallow is not realistic. But this means leaving my support system which now is a little scary. Plus, there is also the question about my working, where we are going to live. There so many things still up in the air.”

“Well, I can’t imagine that securing help would be a problem. I mean as far as baby daddies go you hit the jackpot kid.”

“Yes, but having the nanny is not the same as having your mommy and your close friends you know.”

“I know, but you’ll manage.”

“I know, “First World” problems.”

“I have confidence that Logan will take care of things.”

“Yes, and this will sound funny, but I think that’s part of the problem.”

“How so?”

“Logan is very sweet. I know that he takes great pleasure in taking care of things. But him taking care of everything makes me feel uncomfortable. He did a lot of that when we were in college and throughout our relationship last year. All I had to do was ask and he would give it to me no questions asked. Again, it was sweet and he had no ulterior motives, but in a way it made me overly dependent on him. I’m not blaming him, but feel like this was a factor in my losing my way. You know what I mean?”

“Yes, I understand,”

“I am trying to be more thoughtful and deliberate in my life. I think that was missing the past few years. I was so busy chasing a dream that I didn’t stop to think about the realities. I don’t want to do that anymore. I can’t do that anymore.”

“Well that’s good, you are finally trusting your gut.”

“Yes, but my gut isn’t telling me what I want to hear.”

“It never does.”

“Mitchum Huntzberger offered me a job.”

“Rrreeaallly??”

“Yup, in PR. External communications at The Huntzberger Group. Salary, benefits, he even offered to put me up in corporate housing.”

“That doesn’t sound so much like a job offer than a bribe or just blatant manipulation.”

“Oh yes, he admitted to that. To his credit, he was adamant in stating his belief that he would not have offered me the job if he didn’t think I could handle it, but his main motivation is to provide me stability so Logan and I could have a ‘viable’ family life.”

“Huh, well that’s an improvement. Your grandfather offered Christopher and me marriage and a job
in the insurance biz. At least you don’t have to do the marriage part...or the insurance part. AND you get your own place!”

“So you see it as a trap?”

“It’s a trap only if you make it out to be.”

“It’s tempting, but I want to explore my own options.”

“And those are?”

“That’s the problem, nothing yet. I have to wrap up my current job before I can concentrate on anything else.”

“Yes, that is smart. Can’t overwhelm yourself, you only end up spinning your wheels. Well, at least there is an option. It’s good to have a fallback.”

“I guess so.”

“I do get it though, the whole ‘living your life deliberately' concept. I had that 'Come to Jesus' moment myself.”

“Yeah? When?”

“When I found out I was pregnant with you!”

“Mom, I know how you felt/feel about having to raise me alone, but how did you know that doing so was the right thing?”

“As you know, before you were born, there was a lot of pressure on Christopher and me to ‘do the right thing’ and get married. Our parents had everything planned for us; where we were going to live, where Christopher was going to work, and all of that. I was very resistant to that. Now, I get it, at least the way our parents saw it. It was the path of least resistance. I see how following their plan would have made things easy in the onset, but in the long term, it would have been disastrous because that solution wouldn’t have made things right, you know what I mean? Your father and I would have had a comfortable life, but we would have had terrible problems.”

“Yes, I can see that.”

“And the ‘moment’ happened in the hospital. You dad and I were standing at the nursery window. He was seeing you for the first time. He said, ‘Well, so I guess we should get married.’ And it was then that I knew for sure, I was going to be alone. It wasn’t what he said, but the way he said it, like he was Patti Hearst joining the SLA. He was surrendering while I was refusing to surrender. You know, up until that point everything I did was in reaction or retaliation to my parents, I was not being deliberate in my decisions about my life. But once that stick turned blue, well I knew that things had to change; that I had to make real decisions, not just follow or react to my parents. If not for me, than for you. I could not bear the thought of you growing up unhappy and oppressed like I was. I could not bear the circle repeating itself. For whatever reason, your dad would not/could not fight, but I was. I think that was what really killed it for us, his lack of fight. There were times, especially in the beginning, when I was angry, but in the end, it was better this way. The Haydens are not exactly the most pleasant people. I can’t imagine Straub being too kind, especially after Christopher did not go to Princeton and failed to fulfill the family destiny. Yes, a mother and father living together, house and white picket fence is the ideal, but sometimes it’s better to go it alone. I don’t regret my decision, Rory, not at all. Anyway, that is not exactly your situation, Logan is fighting after all.”
“Yes, but sometimes I think it would be easier if he didn’t. Just leave us to be.”

“Well if he were not interested then yes, you going it alone would probably be the best. But he is interested, and you owe it to this kid to let his/her father in. I may have raised you alone, but the door was always open for Christopher to come in. I think of Luke and all the years he missed with April. I know he is happy now and they have a great relationship, but he missed out on some really important and cool stuff. I think that is why he is going a bit crazy with the presents.”

“Logan’s parents keep asking why we won't just get married. They don’t understand what is preventing us from doing so.”

“Well, it seems the intended bride in question is preventing.”

“Yes, and they don’t get it. I would have my whole life set if we got married and they don’t understand why I won’t take it.”

“Well, just because things look good on paper, doesn’t mean it will work in reality. Anyway, why won’t you? You really don’t love Logan?”

“No, I don’t know if I am into marriage. Co-parenting yes, well I have no choice in that matter. Marriage? I’m not sure. Now that we are in this situation, I feel like I have to be more cautious. My relationship with Logan this past year was so messed up. The fact that we carried on the way we did was not healthy. If it was meant to be, then why did we feel compelled to sneak around? What was wrong between us that we chose to act the way we did? I don't want to get back together with him just because I am pregnant, I don't want to compound the situation by making a bad choice.”

"Yes, I get that."

"Anyway, you know, I was never one of those girls who dreamed about her wedding day. I was that girl that dreamed of being Christiane Amanpour, you know travel, adventure. I mean sure I thought about it with Dean, Jess, and very seriously with Logan, but there was always something else that seemed more appealing. There was never a moment when I thought, “Yes, I have to marry this man.”

“This makes me feel sad.”

“Why?”

“Because you don’t see marriage as a positive thing. I feel like this is my doing, that I didn’t set a good example.”

“No, you are with Luke.”

“Yes, but look how long it took for us to get married.”

“Grandma and Grandpa were married for 50 years! They are example enough for all of us. Lane and Zach are going strong. Babette and Morey are still on their honeymoon. They all work, but they fit, like you and Luke fit. I am not sure with whom I fit.”

“Well, if not Logan than who? What about Jess?”

“Jess?”

“Well, he’s been hanging out an awful lot lately."
“No, really mom, I am not interested in anyone right now. Just me, and little Matilda or Morris here.”

“Ick, Matilda or Morris?”

“Sid or Nancy? Julieanne or Derek?”

"I think you have to search Nameberry again."
Chapter Summary

Rory's pregnancy becomes "public". How will people react? What does that mean for her?

Chapter Notes

AKA, the "Rory is human" chapter and wisdom from Lane.

Virgin Whore Rory Gilmore

April 15, 2017. Saturday, Tax Day. Rory, who was well into her third trimester, was staring out the window watching the people in the square as they prepared for the tomorrow’s Easter festivities. The annual Easter egg hunt and all that accompanied it always invoked wonderful feelings in Rory. She recalled the many years she and her mom spent running around the square looking for eggs and overdosing on Easter candy. Moments such as these made Rory excited for the memories and rituals she would create with her own child.

The winter thaw brought the shedding of heavy sweaters, coats, and scarves, making Rory’s pregnancy more apparent. While it was not a state secret, it was not something that was formally announced either. In Rory’s mind those who needed to be in the know, knew, while others would find out in their own time.

Babette and Morey found out this past February when Rory was at their house helping them set up for their annual Valentines Day celebration. Babette noticed that Rory was avoiding the “Love Punch” (Founders’ Day punch served in solo cups decorated with heart stickers) and other alcoholic drinks. “Why aren’t you drinking sugar? Are you pregnant?” Babette joked after Rory turned down a glass of punch for the third time. “Well, yes I am. Going on week # 18.”

“Huh?”

“I’m pregnant Babette.”

“What?!?! With a baby? A real baby?!?”

“Yes Babette, a real baby.”

“Mooorreeeeey!!!!

Rory, worried that her news would be the talk of the party, was pleasantly surprised that despite the small crowd of close friends and neighbors, the subject of pregnancy did not come up once.
However, that did not mean that the topic died down. Thanks to Rory’s work schedule, she did not have much contact with Babette, Ms. Patty, or anyone else in Stars Hallow outside of Lorelai, Luke, or Lane and Zach, so the brunt of the questions fell to Lorelai. “OMG, Babette is going nuts over this situation of yours. I swear every day there is a new concern or piece of advice she wants me to relay to you.” Lorelai complained on the phone.

“What is it today?” Rory asked, half-laughing.

“She wants to know if your insurance covers home births. Just in case you have a phobia of hospitals.”

“You can assure her that I am having this baby the old-fashioned way, in a hospital connected to monitors with tons and tons of drugs, and yes, my crappy insurance covers at least 1/4 of it.”

“That’s my girl...”

“So what does she know anyway?”

“Well, she knows that you are pregnant. She knows that Logan is an involved and enthusiastic co-parent and that you are excited about this event.”

“So does this mean the whole town knows?”

“Oh yes, the whole town knows.”

While she knew that the people of the town were aware of her news, she was caught off guard by having to deal with how people felt about it. Kirk would not let Rory carry anything heavier than her purse, and Andrew kept handing Rory baby books everytime she walked into the bookstore. Miss Patty kept trying to drag her into belly dancing class (your abdomen will thank me, she reasoned) while Taylor would launch into the soliloquies about family and the importance of marriage to the fabric of a strong society whenever she was in earshot. However, the most disturbing was a conversation that she overheard while shopping for snacks at Doose’s market.

“It’s true, she IS pregnant!” “She’s not married, right?”

“No, she’s not. I heard the father is some rich guy who lives in New York named Logan Huntzberger. Apparently, he’s some publishing heir.”

“How do you know this?”

“When I learned his name I googled him.”

“Hope he’s not married.”

The other person said with a snicker.

“No, but he was engaged. At least that’s what I read in The New York Times.”

“Did she break up that couple too?”

“Who knows??

"I thought she was suppose to be some great success?"

"What single, pregnant and living above a newspaper office is not 'successful’ ?"
"How the mighty have fallen huh?"

Rory immediately exited the store and made a beeline to Lane’s house. “So what have people been saying?” Rory asked Lane as sat down in Lane’s living room.

“Saying about what?” Inquired the confused Lane.

“About me? About my pregnancy?”

“Huh?”

“I was in Doose’s and I heard overheard two people talking about me. I heard 'Is she married?', 'I heard the father is some rich guy who lives in New York.' And 'is he married? No, he was engaged' and 'How the mighty have fallen. The mighty have fallen? What the hell is that?!?!’”

“Ok, ok. Yes, you have been the subject of some talk around town, but if it makes you feel any better, you have been gossiped about no more or no less than anyone else.”

“Well, this is a small town.”

“I just don’t understand, why does anyone care anyway?”

“Rory, come on, you are not that naive. You are not going down the traditional path in life, of course people are going to talk! Haters are everywhere. You are a journalist, you should know that.”

“You know, it’s one thing about my work, but this is about my personal life. And what is this mighty have fallen crap?”

“Well, you know, you were the brainy book nerd in high school. You never got in trouble, you never followed the crowd. You also went to Chilton, graduated from Yale, and went off to be a journalist. You were...are held in pretty high esteem, so naturally there are people who will take pleasure in seeing you in any sort of crisis. They talked when that situation exploded with Lindsey and Dean.”

“They did?”

“Oh, yea.”

“I didn’t know that.”

“Well, you weren’t around to hear it. Anyway, it wasn’t everyone, just a small band of people who have nothing better to do than celebrating other people’s misery because they have no lives of their own.”

“I still don’t like it.”

“Oh I know, I remember how it was.”

“You? And what did you do to garner such hatred, my friend?”

“Well, I had the audacity to get pregnant during my honeymoon. You should have heard the talk when people got wind I was pregnant so soon after the wedding. It was all ‘Yes she got pregnant on her honeymoon, riiight.’ We had the shortest engagement in history, so, of course, that added fuel to the fire. ‘There goes the religious girl, married to save her honor.’ Oh, it was awful.”
“How did you deal?”

“Well, I had the truth on my side and the people who really counted in my life didn’t care. Plus, once Momma got wind of it, she ripped them a new one and after that, the talking stopped. Who needs Clemenza when you have Mrs. Kim, you know? After a while, I was old news. I learned from that experience that you can’t sweat the opinions of idiots.”

“You know, I think what upsets me the most is that this is about my pregnancy, and therefore implicates my kid. I don’t like the feeling of anyone having any sort of negative feeling towards my baby. Really, that’s what gets me. The thought of them even thinking anything negative about my kid makes me want to go after them with a barbed wire wrapped bat.”

“Well, welcome to the pride Lion mom. Look, don’t let them get to you. You have nothing to feel bad about.”

“That’s not entirely true.”

“Elaborate?”

“Lane, I was seeing someone else. Logan was engaged and on the brink of getting married. I was awful to Paul but we were not engaged. But, Odette? The fact that she was also with someone else got us off easy. Imagine if she were fully committed? That’s an awful thing to do to another woman. I mean talk about violating the ‘Sister Code’!”

Rory got up to walk around.

“And then there is the question of why I started seeing Logan again in the first place. It was so easy Lane, it was so easy to slip back into life with Logan. I tried to keep it casual, but who was I kidding? There is no such thing as casual when it comes to Logan.”

“So what, are you saying that you want him back?”

“No, I am not saying that at all. We’re parenting together that I can do. But as far as us getting back together, I don’t know. He took care of me you know, having him in my life allowed me to hide. Being with him was sort of like a drug? My escape from…me. When we reconnected I was feeling like such a failure. I had so much invested in the idea of me being a journalist. I had such a clear idea about where I thought I would be by the time I was thirty-two. Nothing, none of it turned out as planned. And now look at me, all these opportunities, all these people who made sacrifices for me and look what happened? I am single, pregnant, no permanent job. I am a great disappointment.”

“Hey, stop, right now!!! You made choices, no they were not the best, but you were in emotional turmoil. Yes, that’s no excuse, but it is also a viable reason. Does that make you a monster? No! Does that make you human? Yes! Do not berate yourself about this Rory, do not play into the hands of the virgin/whore dichotomy. You are a fully actualized human being capable of both good and bad. Years from now you will look back on this time and it will merely be a blip on your radar. For now, embrace it, hell, own it, and screw everyone else!”

Rory looked at her friend with great admiration. “How did you become so wise?”

“It’s all that time hiding in my closet with my lava lamp and disco ball contemplating Madonna.”

Rory hugged her friend, “Oh Lane, what would I do without you...”

Later that night Rory couldn’t sleep, so she got up and googled Logan and Odette. She waded through a bunch of articles in French until she found the engagement announcement in The New
York Times. Although she had seen pictures of Odette when she found them tucked away on one of Logan’s desk drawers (he was always conscious of putting away pictures when Rory visited) she had never really considered her as a whole. She looked like a young Penelope Cruz. The picture in The Time announcement was a more formal picture than the ones Logan had, no doubt taken during one of her charity events. She and Logan were both dressed to the nines, looking like the perfect high society couple. It was strange, Rory thought to herself, that the relationship chronicled in this announcement would implode within a year and that the bride-to-be would soon be set to marry someone else, while the groom-to-be would be having a baby with another. She considered herself, always the planner, always cautious, always sensible, and how all of that went to hell the past five years. Despite all the planning and working, life can change so quickly. It reminded her of a magnet Mrs. Kim had on her refrigerator that stated, "We plan, God laughs." Well if there is a God, Rory thought, s/he must be having a hilarious time with me.

As she stared at the picture of Logan and Odette, and thought about her life, especially the last two years, and all the twist and turn that brought her to this moment. Rory found herself asking aloud, “Would I trade where I am now for another outcome?”

Rory then smiled when she heard herself answer, “No”.
Third Trimester: Fathers' Day

Chapter Summary

Spurred on by Doyle, Rory and Christopher have a heart to heart talk. Luke also has a surprise for Rory.

Chapter Notes

I always wondered about Rory's relationship with the Haydens. This is sort of their origin story.

“Never be envious of what someone else has. You don't know the price they paid to get it, and you don't know the price they are paying to keep it.”

— Stephan Labossiere

Fathers’ Day

It was a beautiful spring day in New York. Rory was sitting on a bench in Madison Square Park waiting for her lunch companion to arrive. The last two weeks brought an unusual lull at work. With the all the copy written and interviews taped and edited, Rory and her colleagues were waiting for draft results from the design team. While annoying for some, after five months of constant activity, Rory welcomed the short break.

The break meant that Rory could concentrate on other matters, namely her book. It had been a while since she spent any real time on the project. After furiously writing for ten straight chapters, Rory found herself hitting a wall. Not just blocked but a full-scale writer’s fortress. Jess tried to help by getting her manuscript to a couple of editor friends, but their notes did not ring true. One editor told her to keep digging, encouraging Rory to “unearth” Lorelai's more sinister side, “No one could go through all that emotional drama and not feel the least bit vengeful,” he wrote in his notes. “Ugh, yes they can.” Rory thought to herself as she tore up the note. The other editor thought the story worked better as a work of fiction. “Try working your anecdotes into a story, sort of like Grey Gardens meets Rosanne, meets The Odd Couple.” Not quite, Rory thought, as she ripped up that note as well.

It was during dinner with Paris and Doyle that inspiration hit her.

“Doyle,” she asked, “could you read my manuscript?”

“Me? Really?” Doyle responded with surprise.

“Well, you edited me before, you know me, my work, my style. Why not?”

“Ok, I’ll give it a whirl.”
Rory e-mailed the manuscript that very evening and now a week later they were meeting to discuss it.

“Hi there,” she said as Doyle approached her. After the customary hug and kiss greeting, they got their lunch and dove into the book.

“First off” Doyle opened, “really really good. Boy, that mother of yours is one brave kooky lady. I love a woman with moxie.”

“Thanks, that’s what I was aiming for.”

“And your Grandma? What a hoot! I looooved the part when she went nuts after your great-grandmother died. Her Tennessee Williams moments had me in stitches.” Grabbing an imaginary glass and holding an imaginary cigarette and mojito, Dole imitated Emily saying, “Well, more for me…”

Doyle continued, “Lots of great stories, wonderful lessons there about family, strong women making it in the world, just one glaring deficit.”

“What’s that?”

“There not enough of you in it.”

“What do you mean? This story is about my mother and me. I am writing the book for God’s sake”.

“You talk a great deal about your mom, but you are not an equal player. This book is called Gilmore Girls, not Gilmore Girl. You had the intention of writing a book about the both of you, but in the end, it’s uneven. We know nothing about you. How did it feel to be raised by a single mom? How do you feel about your father not being around? How did the fact that you are best friends first and mother and daughter second affect the way you see the world? Those points are important, very important. You paint a perfect picture here. Even the messes you write about are perfect messes. The characters you have are fun but flat. Audiences these days are into authenticity, they don’t want beautiful messes anymore, they want the blood, guts, and emotion. This you have here is too well packaged. It would have worked maybe 15-20 years ago, but today times are different.”

“So ugly messes, not beautiful messes.”

“Ok, maybe not ugly messes. How about honest emotion?”

“And that will bring dimension to my book?”

“Yes, in my honest and humble opinion.”

“How am I suppose to do that?”

“I don’t know. Go with your gut Gilmore.”

“Ha, ha. Thanks.

“You know, this story could also work as a play or even a TV series.”

“Really?”
“When I was reading it I could see the scenes playing out clearly. I even had it cast: Maura Tineary as your mom and Mae Whitman as you. Bonnie Bedelia and Craig T Nelson as your grandparents.”

“And who, pray tell, would play Luke?”

“Ray Romano or that guy from Six Feet Under!”

“And Paris and you? “

“I don’t know, Blake Lively and Ryan Reynolds?”

“My mom and I talk pretty fast and have a lot of inside jokes. In a book at least you can read and reread at your own pace, but on TV? I don’t think a TV audience could keep up, nor is ready for that kind of madness.”

“Suit yourself. But if you want, I can pitch it the next time I am in Tinseltown.”

“That’s’ ok. Thanks, Doyle, you’ve given me a lot to think about.”

The following Saturday evening Rory arrived at Christopher's house for his 49th birthday party. This year he opted for a quiet celebration of “dinner, games, and possibly Netflix with my girls.” It has been a while since she’s been to Christopher’s house. After Christopher and Lorelai’s divorce, he decided to stay in Connecticut so he could look after his mom and be near Rory.

Rory was looking forward this evening. Her meeting with Doyle had her thinking about ways to beef up her book, and she realized that one of the holes that she needed to fill was finding clarity with her dad. Late last year, about two or three days after she found out she was pregnant, Rory met with her father to gain some insight on how she was to deal with her pregnancy. The meeting left her with more questions than answers. Tonight was going to be different. Hopefully, she thought, I can finally get those answers.

That was, if she could get her father alone. Walking into the kitchen she found not only Gigi but also Francine, Christopher’s mother.

“Rory!!” Gigi cried as sauntered over to hug her sister. Rory marveled at how grown-up she looked.

“Hello Rory,” Francine said pleasantly.

“Hello Mrs, Hay… I mean Francine. It’s been a long time.” Rory responded.

“Yes, it has. I think the last time we saw each other is right after Straub died.”

“That long huh?”

“Way too long. So how are you? You look absolutely glowing.”

“Thank you. I’m a week into my third trimester, so I feeling tired again. Not the exhaustion of the first trimester, just tired from the weight.”

“Oh yes, I remember well.”
“Really? It’s been a very long time mom,” Chris interjected.

“There are some things one does not forget.” Francine shot back with a wry smile.

“Well everybody hungry? Mom and Gigi cooked enough food to feed an army.”

“You cooked?” Rory was surprised.

Gigi replied, “Gran and I are taking a cooking class.”

“I’m ashamed to say, short of making toast and boiling an egg, I never learned to cook. Gigi bought me classes for my birthday and we’ve been going together for a couple of weeks now.”

“Sounds like fun.”

“It is! Just, please don’t judge up too much by our cooking.”

The evening meal consisted of a baby green salad, vegetarian Lasagna with garlic bread, and cake and ice cream for dessert (“I bought the cake, I didn’t want to push it.” Francine confessed.)

After dessert came after dinner drinks (Port for the “grown-ups” and sparkling cider for Rory and Gigi) and a strangely competitive game of Cranium. Afterward, more desserts and drinks and more conversation. Topics such as the Trump Administration, the mannequin challenge, and leggings as pants phenomena were discussed. Francine added by telling the girls funny stories of Christopher when he was a kid. At one point Rory mentally stepped back and marveled at how comfortable she was hanging out with her family that she never really knew.

Before they knew it, it was midnight.

“Mom, why don’t you stay the night? You too Rory. There’s no point in driving home.”

Christopher said.

The four of them started tidying up before going to bed. While putting the dishes in the washer, Francine approached Rory. “Rory, I have an early appointment tomorrow, so if I don’t see you I wanted to say goodbye.”

“Well, it was great to see you,” Rory said with a hug.

“Rory, and there is no pressure, but I was wondering if you would like to meet for lunch sometime.”

“Yes, I’d like that very much. I am in the city Tuesday through Thursday, but am in the area on the weekends.”

“How about brunch next week?”

“That will work”

“Ok, I’ll get your number from Chris and call you about the details.”

"I look forward to it!"

"Me too."
“Good night Rory,” Gigi said with a hug before going to bed.

“Good night Rory,” Francine said too.

The two went upstairs, leaving Christopher and Rory alone.

“We only have one guest room, but you can take my room if you want.” Christopher informed Rory

“No, it’s ok. I’ll take the couch in the study. It’s very comfortable.” She replied.

“So, how are you kid? You’ve expanded quite a bit since last I saw you.”

"Yes I have. This one is active too. Kicks me at the most inopportune moments."

"Well, this is Lorelai Gilmore’s grandchild after all."

"And how would this kid be is s/he were Christopher Hayden’s?"

"Quiet and passive aggressive."

"Got it."

"So what’s been going on besides being kicked around?"

"Well, you know, busy at work. Although I had a bit of a lull so I was able to focus on my book for a bit of time."

"Yes, it’s been a while since you mentioned it."

"Well, I hit a wall, but a friend of mine helped me scale it."

"And how did that happen?"

"Well that friend Doyle, remember he was my editor when I was at Yale? He read the manuscript and said that there wasn’t enough of me in it."

"How can that be? You wrote it."

"That’s what I said! He said that I did not put enough of my point of view. That I needed to raise the volume of my voice."

"Well, it is hard when competing with your mother. So do you know how you’re going to go about the changes?"

"Well yes, but I am going to need your help doing this."

"Ok, what can I do?"

"Tell me how you really felt about mom raising me alone."

Christopher let out a huge sigh and got up to pour himself a finger of scotch. "I thought we had this conversation?"
"Yes, but that was under a different context. Plus, you didn’t really answer my question. You let me know that in the end you realized it was best, but you didn’t tell me how you actually felt about it or feel about it now."

"Why is this so important? Why do my feelings have any bearing on how you should feel about something?"

"Because I realized that I don’t know the whole story. I know mom’s point of view, but I don’t know yours. I need to understand before I can form an opinion."

"Well, I hated it. I still hate it. I will always hate it. Not raising you is the biggest regret of my life."

"So if you hated it so much, why did you let it happen?"

"Because I was weak Rory."

"Oh."

Christopher was quiet for a moment to consider this words. “You know there were many things I envied about your mother when we were young. But, and this is going to surprise you, one of the things I envied the most was her relationship with Richard and Emily.”

Rory, laughing in surprise and disbelief. “Whhhaaat?”

“Yes!” Christopher said seemingly surprised that he voiced this thought aloud, “Yes, Richard and Emily. Yes, Lorelai may have had a contentious relationship with them, but compared to the Hayden family, the Gilmore were the Brady Bunch.”

“But they fought all the time!”

“Yes, they did. And as messed up as that was, at least they fought, at least they were communicating. In the Hayden house, there was no debate, there was no fighting. It was Straub’s way or the highway. Imagine living in that kind of oppression? And it permeated into all facets of our lives, to the point that I was happy to have a uniform for school because if I didn’t, I would have had anxiety attacks over what to wear every day. Sure I rebelled, but whenever Straub really got really serious and imposed his will, I always backed down. Lorelai always compared Emily to Idi Ammine? Compared to Straub, she was Martin Luther King Jr.”

Christopher continued, “I know now that my dad, despite all his accomplishments, was a very sick and insecure man. He hated being thought of as nothing less than perfect. Mistakes were not an option for him, although when he did make them, we had to understand. You wouldn’t know it, but he was a man that was so controlled by outside influences. Whether or not it was him winning a case, being an expert at something, he liked being sought after and envied. This was at the core of his being, and it spread to the family as well. Mom and I became an extension of his perfection, and we had to play the perfect part. When we didn’t there was hell to pay.”

"He didn’t ever….get violent?"

"No, he did throw things every once in a while, but his influence and control were very insidious; he always framed his actions as him being altruistic like he was trying to help you to be better. He was very manipulative. He had a way of turning things around so that problem was always someone
else’s fault. That gift made him a successful lawyer and businessman, but personally, he was a big mess. The atmosphere in the house was so toxic. What kind of day you had was dependent on what mood he was in. I was so happy when he went off on business trips. It wasn’t until years later, after all the failed business ventures, after all the false starts, all those things that I did to get his blessing and approval, that I realized what an asshole he really was and that I didn’t need his approval. From then I was able to get my life relatively together.

"Like getting a Volvo and marrying mom?"

"Hey that was a cool car and your mom and I getting together was a question that needed to be answered for both of us. You know Rory, as terrible as he was to me, I am not mad for me, I am mad for my mom."

"Francine?"

"Yes, she suffered so much while with him. It has only been in the past couple of years that she has been able to emerge from the fog. You know she was an artist? A very talented painter. I think that is why my dad fell for her; because she was so creative. Her ambition was always to be a wife and mother, but she still liked to paint. Anyway, there was one time early in their marriage that she was invited to participate in a joint show. Nothing too fancy, just a small gallery in West Port. Well, this one man, a man whom my father held in great esteem, had a negative reaction to one of mom’s painting. It embarrassed dad, and after that, he told her that she had to stop engaging in such frivolity. Never mind that other people thought she was good. It was the opinion of one person that changed her life."

"Wow, I can’t believe she let him do that. Why didn’t she fight?"

"Because that is what she was trained to do. To support and follow her husband and to make him happy. He probably convinced her that she was not good enough anyway."

"That makes me so sad."

"It is sad. She started painting again. Gigi taking her to cooking lesson? That’s big too. Asking you to brunch? That’s huge. Straub is rolling in his grave as we speak."

"What do you mean?"

"When we told my parents about you, he naturally hit the roof. He never wanted anything to do with you, Rory. Oh yes, there was the whole idea of your mother and me getting married, but really that was Emily and Richard’s doing. If my father had his way Lorelai would not have gone through the pregnancy at all, or given you up for adoption, basically anything to keep me out of it. While publicly advocating marriage, in private it was all about how to rid ourselves of this “problem”. Mom so wanted to be involved in your life, but again Straub put the kibosh on that too. Even on his death bed. you would have thought that being so sick would have given someone perspective, but no, he was angry up until the last breath. Angry that he got sick, angry at how unfair life was, angry at how rotten life was because he worked so hard and nothing lived up to his expectations. In so many ways, it was a great relief when he finally went."

"So it was your dad that kept you away from us?"

"No, it was me. On the one hand, I had my dad who was adamantly against me being involved in your life, and on the other was Lorelei who was ready for us to bolt. For me, as a sixteen-year-old, it
was very confusing. I think your mother sensed my hesitation because in the weeks before you were
born, I felt her withdrawing from me. Whenever she discussed plans, they were no longer about
“us” but about “her”. What really sealed it was what happened when you were born. Lorelai didn’t
tell me until after the fact, when you were all cleaned up and pretty. By the time I got to the hospital
you were already named for Pete’s sake. And not just named, but named Gilmore, despite the fact
that I was listed as your father on your birth certificate. Other than matching earlobes, there was
nothing me or Hayden about you. I told your mother that I thought we should get married, but it was
half-hearted because I felt like she already made her decision to go it alone. She knew I was not
fully committed, and she didn’t need the dead weight. I did try though. Your love for U2? I take
credit for that."

"Really now? I think mom would go a couple of rounds with you on that."

"She would lose!!" Christopher implored with a wry smile. "She hated U2 when they first came
out. I would play records and she would tell me to," imitating Lorelai, "'turn off that noise!' When I
would come to visit you, I would play them for you when she wasn’t in the room. I even put a
poster next to your crib."

"Yes, The October Album! I had that poster in my room for a while. I never thought about where I
got it. I assumed it was from Mom."

"No, it was from me."

"I’m so, so sorry you had to go through this Dad."

Waving off her sympathy, “It’s ok. I have made peace with this aspect of my life. I am lucky Rory,
in many ways. I am lucky that I was able to pull myself together for Gigi. I am lucky that despite
my absence you continued to welcome me into your life. I am lucky that I am able to hold down a
job and function. What I want to do now is move forward. In some ways, it was better that your
mom raised you alone. Remember how Straub treated you when we saw each other at your
grandparents’ house for dinner? He was very rude to you then. Imagine having to grow up with
that? I like to think that by not being involved I was protecting you from him, saving you from a
lifetime of heartache. Imagine being burdened with the notion that you are the source of all the
Hayden family failures? Not a good life indeed."

"Yes, mom made the same observation."

"You are a kind, intelligent, wonderful young woman. It was hard for your mother, but in the end,
this was the way life was supposed to happen. I have regrets, but I will take those regrets if it was
meant to make you the person you are now. I wasn’t there for you Rory, but I am now. I want you
to have the parents and your baby to have the grandparents your mother and I did not have when we
were in this situation. I want life to be better for this generation, not perpetuate the vicious cycle. So
I am here for you kid, day and night, 24/7, 525,600 minutes a year, no matter what. You do know
that don’t you?

Rory looked at her father, and with a reassuring smile replied, "Yes dad, I know, I really do."

Later the following afternoon Rory was driving home. As she approached her apartment building,
she suddenly changed directions, heading back through the main streets and towards Lorelai and
Rory arrived to find Luke's truck parked in the driveway. She went to the front door, ringing the doorbell before walking in, “Luke? Mom? Are you home?”

“I’m back here!” Luke replied.

Rory headed towards the kitchen to find Luke folding laundry in her bedroom.

“I’m barely out the door and you turn my room into a laundry room?” she asked with mock offense.

“Well sorry, but it is a logical place seeing that the laundry is out the back door.”

“It’s ok Luke.”

“So what’s going on? Lorelai is out with Michele doing stuff for the Annex renovation.”

"It’s ok, I am just here to find something.”

"Can I help?"

"It’s a U2 poster." Rory responded while she looking through her desk drawers, “About 1/2 the size of a regular poster. It used to hang on that wall. I can’t remember where I put it.“

"Not in your desk?"

"No... Oh yes, now I remember! I tucked it in with some record albums. Those are in the garage.”

Luke suddenly became more alert.

"You want to go to the garage?"

"Yea."

"It really dirty there, you shouldn’t go in there, not good for the baby.”

"I’m not fragile Luke and baby is fine. There are no toxic chemicals in there right?"

"Well stuff is all over the place, I doubt you will find it.”

"Luke?"

"Yes?"

"Why are you trying to keep me out of the garage?"


Luke and Rory walked to the garage, where Rory found an unfinished crib like creation, obviously hand built by Luke.

"Luke! What did you do?"

"It’s a co-sleeper. I read about it on the internet. You can leave this side open and put it right next to
your bed so when the baby needs you at night all you have to do is reach over. When s/he gets older, you can put in another rail and make it into a mini crib. And, get some extension rails, and it becomes a twin bed."

Rory gave Luke a big hug, "I don’t know what to say."

"I hope it's not too much. I know I've been going a bit nutty with the presents. I didn't get to be around when April was a baby, so my excitement is spilling over."

"No Luke, it's perfect. 'Thank you' doesn't seem enough."

"It’s my pleasure. I'm really happy for you. This is such a great thing and well, now that you know, you can pick the stain so it can match the decor in your apartment."

"It's cool that the baby can say that his/her first and maybe only bed was made by...Luke, what is the baby going to call you?"

"I don’t know...Luke?"

"Grandpa Luke?"

Luke smiles. "You know, I used to call my grandfather Grampy. I always thought that if I did become a grandfather, I would be called Grampy too."

"Ok, so Grampy it is. You know Grampy could be mixed up with Grumpy, right?"

"Yes, I know. My Grandfather was also known for that name as well."
Third Trimester: Parental Aspirations

Chapter Summary

Rory and Logan discuss what kind of parents they want to be.

Chapter Notes

One of the narrative holes I found after I finished. This may lead to more. Thank you in advance for your comments.

Parental Aspirations

It was a damp and cloudy Friday morning, the kind of day that would make one want to play hooky from life, skip work, stay home and read a book. Rory and Logan were doing just that, partially. Today they were intent on completing their baby registry. With the shower Shira was hosting taking place in a month, she was calling them daily with reminders get the registry together. Although Rory offered to take care of the whole thing on her own, Logan insisted on participating, “If we’re going to get free stuff from my mom’s friends, we might as well milk it for all its worth, right Ace?”

They started the day at Babies R Us, “to keep things egalitarian” as Rory insisted. With the advice from Honor, Lane, and Paris, Rory and Logan spent the morning finding and registering for much of the basics. Next, they went off to Babesta, a boutique that Honor and Paris recommended for the more unique and upscale items ‘to keep the air of luxury for my mother” as Logan put it.

Between picking out furniture, debating rockers over bouncy seats, getting tangled in baby carriers, stroller races, and analyzing the merits of shopping cart covers, pacifier wipes, and diaper genies, Rory and Logan found the experience more enjoyable than expected. With their mission accomplished, Rory and Logan ducked into their favorite neighborhood bistro for lunch. The bistro was near both their workplaces and became the go-to place when they met for meals during the week. They were there so much that they not only had their own table, but the waiters and waitresses automatically brought them their standard drinks. “So that wasn’t so painful,” Logan said as he drank his iced tea, “Yea”, Rory replied, “for some reason, I thought we would have disagreed more.”

“Are you surprised we didn’t”

“Well, I was about to go 12 rounds over the diaper wipe warmer."

“Ace, that was a joke!”

“Yes, now I know that. You really had me going.”

“Really? You thought I was serious?”
“I claim pregnancy brain.”

“You know you won’t be able to claim that for much longer.”

“No, after that I can claim ‘momnesia’.”

“So you pretty much have a physiological excuse for gullibility and/or absentmindedness for the rest of your life?”

“Yes, and when you gain the ability to push a human being the size of a small watermelon out of a 10cm diameter portal in your body, then you can claim it to.”

“Touche Ace.”

Rory smiled at Logan, he smiled back. All of a sudden Rory started feeling self-conscious and looked away.

“Logan? Have you ever pictured exactly what kind of parent you want to be?”

“Yes. It’s been pretty much present in my mind ever since you told me.”

“Would you care to share any insights?”

“You mean other than the opposite of pretty much everything my parent did?”

“Yes, but what does that look like?”

“Well, as you know, I was pretty much raised by a nanny, and I don’t want to repeat that. I guess the best way to put it is I want this kid to feel “grounded”; I want him or her to feel like s/he has a solid foundation. That was something I didn’t have as a kid. Yes, there were a ton of expectations, but not a lot of support. I never felt rooted or really attached to anyone or anything, until…well…”

“Until when?”

“Until we got together.”

“Oh…”

“Well, as you see this happening is for me to make a conscious effort to be more “hands-on”? I mean I know we are going to need and have a lot of help at the beginning, but beyond that, I want us to do things on our own as much as possible. I think not having a live-in nanny is a good idea because it will force us to do things ourselves. I am prepared to change the diapers, do laundry, give baths, read bedtime stories, the whole nine yards. I want to take the kid to the park on Saturday mornings, be present at all the doctor’s appointments, be part of the decision about school, be there on all the first days of school, homework, soccer games, dance recital, band concerts, science fairs, you name it. I just want to be present, I want real interactions, I want to know my kid. And,” Logan added with a grin, “I want every birthday cake to be a plain sheet cake with buttercream frosting.”

Rory couldn’t help but smile at that last statement. “What about you Ace?” Logan asked, “I can’t see you having too much anxiety.”

“Why? Because I had such a ‘perfect’ childhood?”

“Well, I wouldn’t you say that, but you did have a happy childhood, right”

“Yes, yes I did. Despite not having much, I can say that my childhood was ideal. However, that
doesn’t mean that I would want to repeat everything my parents did.”

“Really? I can see that with your dad, but you and Lorelai are pretty tight. In fact, you have the best parental relationship of anyone I know. What would you change?”

“My mom had a policy, “best friends first, mother and daughter second”, as a little kid, that’s great because I always had someone to play with, to feed my imagination, to let me explore who I was. But as I got older, I don’t know, perhaps I could have done with a little more structure? Maybe I would have benefitted from not being so privy to some aspects my mother’s personal life? At the time I thought it was ok, but looking back…there were times when I needed a mom and what I got was a best friend. It’s not that she let me run wild, well not that I would have run wild, but she had the mom card and maybe she could have played it more than she did. I don’t fault her for wanting to have that kind of relationship with me, seeing how terrible her relationship was with my grandparents when she was growing up. That and being a single parent, well, it can make issues with personal borders and parental guidance somewhat murky. I think this generation could benefit from a bit more “parent” and less “friend”, but only by a little”

“Wow, and here I thought Lorelai was the perfect parent.”

“Oh, Lorelai is not perfect, not by a long shot. She would tell you that herself.” Rory paused for a moment, “I had a really interesting talk with my dad the other day.”

“Really? What about?”

“About him letting my mother raise me alone.”

“That must have been an intense conversation.”

“Well, it wasn’t the first time we had this conversation. Although it is the first time that he shared some real insights.”

“So what brought this on?”

"My book. I had Doyle review it and he said there was not enough of me in it. Consequently, in putting more thought into it, issues regarding my father's absence started coming out. “

“Great psychological breakthroughs like you see in the movies?”

“No, nothing dramatic. There was no weeping and wailing or gnashing of teeth, or some grand realization of this great subconscious voice influencing my every move. However, it did bring up some questions, questions that my father was finally able to answer. It gave me a better understanding of the big picture of my family dynamics and ultimately myself.

“Like what?”

“Like why he and my mom didn’t stay together. Why he continued to stay away while I was a kid. I also learned some very interesting things about his side of the family. Did I ever tell you about my one interaction with his father?”

“No, you didn’t.”

“I was sixteen. Mom and I had just re-established ties with my grandparents. Dad came to town for a visit and my grandma arranged for us to have a family Friday Night Dinner with the Haydens. Needless to say, it was a bad idea. It wasn’t long before everyone started screaming at each other. Straub referred to me as “that girl” and accused mom of not only ruining my Dad’s life but also
essentially breaking the Hayden family. He was so angry, and he made me feel so awful; like my existence destroyed everything.”

“Wow, what an ass!”

“Yea, I seem to remember Grandma referring to him in that way that night. She assured me that he was a jerk and that “my existence was not a regret.” My mom and dad and I had a long talk about it afterward as well, but you know, I could never quite get Straub out of my head. I am just realizing how that night influenced the some of the choices I made in life.”

“Like how?”

“That I had to do well. That I had to succeed to show that all the sacrifice that others made for me was worth it.”

“Ace, come on, he was an ass, you shouldn’t sweat the opinions of idiots.”

“Yes, I know, and I did for the most part, but there were times that I let the memory of his opinions really affect me. I mean really sink its hooks into me and that dragged me down.”

“Like when?”

“In college, after that episode at dinner with your mother and then with the internship with your dad. I mean, it made me want to steal a boat and drop out of school!”

“Yes, but you came back and killed it! Phi Beta Kappa? Editor of the Yale Daily News? Obama Campaign? Those are no small accomplishments.”

“Yes, but then things took a downturn. I have to confess, I let that notion drag me down again.”

“Well, he was wrong. Everyone stumbles. It's not what happens to you, but how you respond, and so far you’ve responded well. You have a job, we are functional, your family and friends still love you, things are looking up.”

“Yea. Anyway, that conversation with my dad helped. I learned more about him, his circumstances when I was born and growing up, Straub and Francine and their relationship. Ultimately I learned it was best that I grew up the way I did. Hard as it was at times, with a family like the Haydens, it was best that I wasn't exposed to them.”

“Do these new insights have any impact on how you see our situation?”

“Well yes. I know that you are all in and that your sister is in, but what about your parents and the rest of your family? I know so far they have been supportive, but in all honesty, I am still waiting for the other shoe to drop. I realized the impact of and on your family was one of the reasons why I waited so long to tell you. I did not my kid to shoulder the responsibility of the ruining the “dynastic plan.”

Logan considered Rory's words. Given all that was put into his marriage to Odette, combined with Rory’s history with his family, Logan could understand her anxiety.

“Well, you don't have to worry about my parents.”

“How can you be so sure?”
“I’m sorry you had to go through that with Christopher’s father Ace. Really, he was a miserable ass, and I can see how that situation would make you feel cautious regarding my family. However, the fact that my mother is throwing us a shower? Publically acknowledging our situation proves her support, at least for the kid. They really cater to the grandchildren so I cannot see them ever being intentionally malicious towards the baby. Now, it will not be perfect and I am sure there will be skirmishes ahead, but I think that would happen marriage or no marriage, Odette or no Odette. Just know Rory, the baby and you are my top priority; you two will always come first. I would never allow our kid to be treated like you were by anyone family or not. Know that any drama my family tries to stir, I always, always have your back.”

‘Thanks, and same for you. Yes, as long as we keep focus on us, then we’ll be ok.’

Lifting his glass, “Agreed”.

“Yes, we just need to focus on our own parental aspirations. Focus on the kid, and the rest will take care of itself.”

“It’s good we have each other, we can keep each other in line.”

“Explain?”

“I mean, call each other out when we are veering in the wrong direction. For example, if I am missing in action because of work or some other task, you have the right to call me on it.”

“I don’t want to nag.”

“It’s not nagging if I give you permission.”

“Ok. If I am too much in friend mode when I should be in parent mode.”

“I promise to pull you back in.”

“Good. Well, I don’t think that it will be too hard for you. The fact that we are sharing custody kind of puts some structure in your life. I mean you will only have the baby to yourself two nights out of the week and every other weekend. So you will have “off duty” time to focus on other things. So in a way, that good for you.”

“Why yes, it is,” Logan responded with a fake smile. While the situation did bring structure, in truth it was not what he wanted.

Rory looked at Logan and smiled, “I think we’ll do pretty well with this parenting thing.”

Returning Rory’s smile, Logan replied, “I hope so Ace, I really hope so.”
Chapter Summary

Emily, Lorelai, and Rory get cornered by the Huntzbergers. Who will win and who is the unlikely ally? Rory and Logan have an honest moment.

Chapter Notes

Simple rule, don't mess with the Gilmore Girls. Also, more of Rory and Logan yelling at each other (and a debate with Jess for good measure.)

But We Are Gilmores

It was 8:30 am when Emily Gilmore decided to rise out of bed. At first she was a little confused, waking to unfamiliar surroundings. After a minute or two she remembered she was no longer in the peaceful confines of her Nantucket sanctuary, but rather in a room at The Dragon Fly Inn. Emily got dressed at a leisurely pace and proceeded downstairs for breakfast. "Good Morning Mrs. Gilmore," the waiter greeted as she sat down at her table. He handed her a menu, “The breakfast specials are listed to the right, but if there is anything you would like that is not on the menu, Pauline said she could see what she could do.” It's good to have connections, Emily thought as she sipped her coffee and perused the menu.

About an hour later Lorelai appeared, dressed in a dignified "proper" outfit and obviously very annoyed. "Good morning mother, I hope you slept well,” she said a bit sarcastically.

"Lorelai, it's too early in the morning to start. And remember we are doing this for Rory?”

"Ugh, for Rory,” Lorelai adds dramatically, “what did we do to deserve this kind of treatment? She owes us big time. BIG! TIME!"

“Yes, I know.” Emily responded, rolling her eyes, “You’ve said that a million times...and,” she added emphatically, “YES, Rory does owe us.”

Shira Huntzburger's baby shower for Rory was two weeks away. In an effort to 'create an occasion that Rory would enjoy', Shira invited Emily and Lorelai to a tasting at their club in West Port. Having loosened her ties with the Connecticut social set, Emily was not too keen on giving in to the beckonings of the Grand Dame, but this occasion was tied to Rory, so Emily complied.

"Why?!?!?” Lorelai demanded when the subject was first brought up a little over a week ago.

"Because” Emily lectured, “Shira is going to be an in-law of sorts. She can make Rory’s life and our lives either pleasant or hellish. I choose pleasant, and attending this lunch will at least set Rory on the pleasant path. It's the first invitation, and the first invitation is important. After this, you can go
on ignoring the Huntzbergers as much as you want. So practice your happy face and deal with it!

Putting on a happy face was something that Emily has not had to do in a while. However, because she was well trained in this social norm, Emily was able to easily put herself in 'gracious guest' mode. *This is a happy occasion,* Emily coached herself as she got ready, happy indeed. Yet, with the cloud of Rory's situation looming so overwhelmingly above her, it was hard for Emily not to be worried. It wasn't enough that Rory was unmarried and pregnant, but also not permanently employed, and living in a studio apartment. Sure there was temporary and freelance jobs, and the memoir (which Emily wasn't too happy about), but nothing steady, nothing solid. *A child needs to have stability,* she remembered herself preaching to Lorelai over and over again. But this time Rory isn't 16. Rory was an adult. Rory had to find a way to deal.

It wasn't as if Rory did not have options financially speaking. Thanks to the arrangement made by her great-grandmother, Lorelai I, and now Richard, Rory always had the financial backing to live a comfortable life. Yet, she eschewed the easy way, choosing to live off the money she made from working, saving the money from her trust funds for a “rainy day.” Now that there was a baby on the way, Emily wondered how Rory's attitude would change; you can't find a bigger storm than a child. "How times have changed," Emily muttered to herself as she and Lorelai proceeded through their 45-hour drive to West Port.

"What?" Lorelai asked.

"Oh, sorry I was just thinking aloud."

"About what?"

"Oh, how times have changed. In my day if a girl got pregnant, you got married. Now it's 'co-parenting’. I just can't wrap my head around it."

"Well the times they are a changin'"

"And you're ok with this?"

"Yes, it's better than having to force a relationship. I've seen enough toxic "keep it together for the kids" marriages to know that it isn't the answer to everything. Rory and Logan are working it out."

"You know, she would be set for life if she married him. Even if they ended up divorced we could prenup it to guarantee that she could be comfortable for the rest of her life and beyond. In my day women would see that as a ‘win’."

"Yes, but that day has passed and also that's not the way Rory sees it."

"Yes, I know. Believe me, widowhood has opened my eyes to the realities of being that dependent. I understand why she is keeping him at arm's length. I understand her to need to establish herself independently. There is no worse feeling than having the rug pulled from under you, no matter what the circumstance. I don't know Lorelai, I vacillate between thinking that Rory is being brave and smart, to thinking she's a total idiot."

"Well if it makes you feel any better," Lorelai said with a wide smile, "I feel the same way."

They arrive at the club, where they were promptly met by the valets. "Hmm, fancy..." Lorelai mockingly observed as they walked into the grand entrance.

"Lorelai, manners," Emily scolded.
Lorelai excused herself to go to the ladies room leaving Emily to head to the dining room alone. "I'm here to meet Shira Huntzberger," she informed the hostess. Leading her to a less crowded corner of the dining room Emily was surprised to find not Shira, but Francine Hayden.

"Francine, what are you doing here?"

"Shira invited me. You didn't know?"

"No, she didn't tell me. I wonder why?"

"Maybe because I am Rory's grandmother too?"

Emily knew that Rory and Francine had reconnected and even had lunch a couple of time. Nevertheless, a few weeks of contact did not establish the title of grandmother, Emily thought. What is Shira up to?

"Oh well," Emily replied trying to keep her composure, "how did she know to call you?"

"Maybe Logan told her that Rory and I were talking? Or maybe she heard it through the grapevine. You know how fast news travels in our circle Emily, especially when it involves the Huntzbersgers."

"True," Emily said, a little upset with herself for forgetting the gossip circuit, "news does travel."

"So, anyway, how are you?" Francine asked fondly, "It's so good to see you. Nantucket seems to be agreeing with you."

"Yes, well sometimes one needs a change of scenery to gain some perspective on life," Emily responded in a surprisingly warm way.

"Yes, I know. Widowhood is a very jarring experience."

"Indeed it is."

At that moment Shira arrived. "I'm so sorry ladies. I am always late for everything, even appointments I make."

"It's no problem Shira," Emily replied, "It gave Francine here and I some time to get reacquainted."

"Oh, so you don't see each other much? Really?"

"Our lives and schedules are not as in tune as in the past." Francine chimed in.

"Well thank you for coming. I thought it would be nice if we had a little sampling of everything we were going to serve at the shower. I thought perhaps buffet style, that way people could mix and mingle as they would like, what do you think?"

"Shouldn't we wait until Lorelei get here? What is keeping that girl? I better call her."

"Oh Emily, don't worry about Lorelei, she's with Mitchum. I saw them engrossed in a conversation at the bar."

"Mitchum is here?"

"Why yes," Shira said on an unconvincingly nonchalant way.
Emily immediately went on high alert.

A few moments earlier, across the club, Lorelei emerged from the ladies room and was about to make her way towards the dining room when Mitchum Huntzberger approached her.

“Excuse me, Lorelai Gilmore?”

Lorelai looked at Mitchum surprised, “Yes?”

Extending his hand he replied, “I’m Mitchum Huntzberger Logan’s…”

Taking his hand Lorelai finished Mitchum’s introduction, “…father. Oh, nice to put a face with the name.”

“I hope the face doesn’t disappoint.”

“Well if it did, would I be telling you that?”

“Touche Lorelai, touche.”

“So, did you come here with your wife? Will you be joining us for lunch?”

“No, party planning is not my cup of tea. Shira would veto all my ideas anyway; she’s very particular when it comes to event planning.”

Then why and I here? Lorelai thought, “Oh well then, I don’t want to keep them waiting,” she tells Mitchum.

“Come join me for a drink.”

“But my mother and Shira are waiting.”

“Oh, they can get along without you. Come on, I insist.”

“Well, if you insist.”

Lorelei and Mitchum go to the bar where Mitchum guided them to a quiet corner which rendered Lorelai suspicious. The waiter soon arrived to take their order.

“I’ll have a scotch neat. Lorelai?”

“Scotch at 11:30 in the morning on an empty stomach? Sure why not! I’ll have one too!”

At that same time in the dining room Emily, Francine, and Shira were settling in. After making pleasant conversation, the waitstaff proceeded to present small plates of various dishes; baby green salad, four different kinds of quiches, vegetable dishes, a fruit tray, twelve kinds of pastries. This along with choices of Mimosa, Bloody Marys, champagne, and sparkling drinks made Emily quite full and sleepy.

This was all before the dessert and coffee.

“So Emily, how is life in Nantucket? Peaceful I hope?” Shira inquired.
“Yes, it’s quite lovely. There is nothing like the ocean to wash away the stress.” Emily replied.

“We do miss you. We used to have so much fun at our events remember?”

“Oh yes, I remember.”

“I mean just last week, at the Heart Association fundraiser, we were all talking about you and how much we missed you, weren’t we Francine?”

“Well, we were reminiscing about last year’s fundraiser, when we honored Richard. He did a lot to help fund the Heart Center at St. Josephs”

“Yes, I remember,” said Emily

“I am so hoping that Rory enjoys this shower.” Shira continued, “This is really her occasion to be introduced to ‘everyone’.”

“Everyone?”

“Oh, you know our circle. Now that she will be somewhat part of the family, she will need to get up to speed. I mean I know you are out, but Rory is at a different place in life. Don’t you agree Francine?”

“Agree with what?” the confused Francine asked.

“About Rory getting to know people. She will be expected to show herself at events before she knows it.” Shira somewhat condescendingly informed.

“I am not sure how much she will be involved in that world. Rory has her own career and other interests to think about.” Emily added

“Well, yes. But you never know. Motherhood has a way of changing one’s priorities. Suppose after the baby is born she would want to stay home and care for him/her herself? What is a break turns into years? She needs to have a fallback. It’s good for her to have options. Don’t you agree?”

“Yes, it’s true, but Rory can find her own options.”

“Oh, I’m sure she can,” Shira said preciously, “I am just showing her an additional path, that’s all. So what are her plans Emily? Logan is so stingy with information.”

“They are co-parenting. Apparently that is all the rage now.”

“So Rory is moving to the city to be near Logan?”

“I don’t know.”

“So Logan and Rory have worked out arrangements?”

“I don’t know.”

Shira was now frustrated, “Well what do you know Emily?”

Emily passive-aggressively responded, “What I said before, they are co-parenting.”

“Well, I don’t like it.”
“Excuse me?”

“I don’t like it, and I am surprised that you are not feeling the same way.”

“Well Shira, I have learned that people are going to do what they are going to do. Why fight it?”

“But it’s not…traditional. I mean, people are already talking, saying that they are both being irresponsible, treating their situation like a reality TV show. There are some that are chomping at the bit for this situation to explode. It all just so disturbing.”

“Why do you care what people think?”

“It’s not so much of what people think, it’s just that it’s so…not proper. It’s not good for the baby. Children need stability. Francine, you agree with me right?”

“WWwwell…” Francine nervously tried to answer.

“…I am sure that Rory and Logan will make sure that happens.” Emily interrupted

“Are you sure that is going to happen?” Shira asked

“I am sure that Rory is not out to make life difficult for Logan.”

“Well she already is. Come on we all know how he feels about her. He would give her the world if she let him, and yet she is stringing him along. What more does she want?”

“She wants for nothing. Whatever reasons why Rory is choosing not to get involved with Logan, those are her own. I do know that she has been very honest about how she feels, so she is not stringing him along. If Logan cannot deal with the reality, then that’s his problem.”

“Well, how do we know she won’t make life difficult for Logan later on?”

“They same way we know that Logan won’t make life difficult for Rory.”

“Rory would be set for life if she married Logan. There are advantages to being an Huntzberger, she will never need for anything.”

“Yes, but we are Gilmores, so she is already not in need.”

“More importantly”, Francine chimed in, looking at Emily meaningfully and then to Shira directly, “We are Rory’s family, so what ever happens, she will be more than fine.”

Back at the bar, Lorelai was nursing her scotch, carefully considering Mitchum.

“Ok…Mitchum. Why am I really here?”

“What do you mean?” Mitchum answered innocently.

“I mean my mother and I were invited here under the guise of planning a party for Rory, which we are not hosting. Your wife claimed that she needs help, but according to you she is a party planning Nazi, and then you show up and spirit me away to the bar and now we’re drinking scotch. I don’t know, why do I feel like I am Freddo and you are taking me fishing?”

Mitchum smirks, “Freddo…funny.”
“But I’m not too off the mark am I?”

“You’re very perceptive Lorelai Gilmore. No, you are not off the mark; I did want to have a discussion with you.”

Why all the smoke and mirrors? Why all the intrigue? You know we have phones in Stars Hallow.

“I just wasn’t sure if you would agree to meet with me.”

“And why is that?”

“Because I want to discuss this situation with Rory and Logan and how we can influence them in making better decisions about their lives.”

“Ah, yes, you’re probably right, I would have ignored you. Ok,” Lorelai said raising her glass, “well we’re here so hit me with it.”

“We need to figure out how to get those two together.”

“Why? They seem to be doing fine on their own.”

“For now, but once the reality of the baby hits them, it will get more complicated.”

“In what way?”

“Well, Logan doesn’t have a job that is portable. He has just hit a stride in his career and is pretty much ensconced in New York. Rory is not. Rory can go anywhere, and as we know, traditionally, the children go where the mother goes.”

“And you are thinking that Rory will take the baby away from Logan.”

“That is a fear.”

“Let me assure you, it is unfounded.”

“How? I have not heard any news as to what Rory has decided for her future.”

“Well, she’s wrapping up her current job, and it’s been pretty intense. I don’t think she has the physical and mental energy to see past next week.”

“I offered her a job. She has not responded.”

“Hence, my previous comment?”

“This is a golden opportunity that is being handed to her, and she is not jumping at it. Why not?”

“Because of the person who is handing it to her? You two don’t have quite the sterling employee-employer record.”

“That’s water under the bridge. I’m only looking out for her best interest.”

“And your son’s.”

“No, I am looking out for our grandchild’s best interest. I am looking out for the best interest of that family.”

“Look, she doesn’t have all the facts. She needs to consider other options, then she can make a
decision. She is a very deliberate person.”

Half, laughing and smirking Mitchum responded, “Oh really, she is huh?”

Lorelai very offended replied, “Yes, she is. Just what are you implying? And chose your words very carefully Mitchum!”

“Well if she were deliberate, then does that mean she planned to be in this position? She wanted things to be this way? Because my impression is that this situation was a result of carelessness.”

“In which your son was also an active participant.”

“He never meant for this to happen…”

“…And neither did Rory!”

“…I mean he was engaged…”

“…and, need I remind you, he willingly put that little “inconvenience” aside to be with Rory…”

“…We’ve done everything we can to make this easy for her, and she is still being difficult.”

“Whoa, whoa, so are you saying that all this stress and angst is all my daughter’s fault?’”

“If she would just accept this plan, be it they get married, or she takes the job, then this matter would be settled.”

“Look, I understand that you are concerned for your son and his relationship with his child. I can assure you that Rory has no intention of making that relationship difficult for him. She knows what it’s like to grow up without a father. She turned out ok, but she did miss her dad when she was growing up. She would never inflict that kind of grief on her kid if she could help it. I could easily turn this argument around and ask how do we know that Logan will keep up his end of the bargain?”

“Excuse me?”

“Well, if we are going to based things on past behavior, then let’s talk about Logan! He doesn't exactly have the most sterling record now does he? One could say he doesn’t seem to take commitment seriously. Putting aside all his oat-sowing before he got together with Rory, like you said he was engaged, on the verge to be married, and yet chose to have an affair with my daughter. For all I know Rory will make all these sacrifices to make sure that they have a relationship only to have him choose to go another direction. How do I know that all of this devotion that Logan is displaying is not for show? How do I know that he won't abandon Rory and the baby when the first opportunity for another woman comes up? How do I know that he won't essentially abandon them to concentrate on becoming Master and Commander of the publishing world?! You’re so worried about Rory’s ability to hold up her end of the parenting bargain, can you guarantee me that Logan will hold up his?”

Mitchum is quiet for a moment. “No, I can’t”

“Well then, seems we are at a crossroads.”

“We can open a lot of doors for Rory.”

“Yes, but we are Gilmores. We open our own doors.”
Later that afternoon at Luke’s Diner. Lorelai and Emily were sitting at the counter debriefing Rory, while Luke and Jess are working behind the counter listening as well.

“I can’t believe they did that,” the exasperated Rory exclaimed.

“Don’t worry we got your back. Your grandmothers slayed that Shira dragon with one parry of their sword.” reported Lorelai

“Francine really stood up to Shira?” Rory asked Emily.

“Yes, it was quite a significant moment.” Emily replied.

“I have half a mind to skip that stupid shower. Let Shira twist in the wind.” Rory threatened.

“No Rory, you can’t do that. No matter what, you are linked to those people for the rest of your life, you have to play this game to stay civil. You don’t have to do everything, just enough.” Emily said.

“Also, think of all the presents you will be missing out on. Make sure to register for all the expensive stuff.” Lorelai added.

“Okay, I will go and wear my happy face, but I won’t like it.” Rory lamented.

“Oh, there’s my little passive-aggressive angel” Lorelai said preciously.

"Well," Emily said, “I would like to go back to the inn and rest up a bit before dinner. We are still meeting at the Dragon Fly this evening?” Emily asked Rory.

“6 pm sharp,” Rory confirmed.

“Ok see you then.”

Lorelai and Emily left the diner.

“Wow, that Huntzberger crew is unbelievable.” Jess said sitting down with Rory.

“Yes, they are quite a pair. Going through my mother, and grandmothers when all they had to do was ask.”

“I have a feeling that they didn’t bother to ask because they knew that you would not give them the answer they wanted.”

“True, they are used to getting what they want.”

“People like that don’t take ‘no’ very well.”

“Well, at least mom and Grandma didn’t give in. And Francine, a win for her. Oh, and now I have to tell Logan about this.”

“Why?”

“Because they his parents and he should know what they are up to?”

“No, I mean what’s the point? He probably already knows. He probably put them up to it.”

“No, he wouldn’t do that.”
“Ok, well he probably planned it with them.”

“No he didn’t! Logan would never do that. He has always taken great pains to keep his parents out of his business.”

“Oh come on Rory, you don’t think that he was in on this to manipulate you?”

“No, I don’t. Why do you think that?”

“Because the man still has feelings for you. He is trying to get you to let down your guard so he can swoop in.”

“Swoop? Swoop? And then what will he do next? Fy me to his nest and have his way with me?”

“Yes, in a matter of speaking.”

“Jess, you don’t know what you’re talking about. Where is this coming from anyway?”

“I don’t trust the guy ok? I don’t trust that he will do right by you or this kid.”

“And this is based on?”

“His past behavior. Remember how he acted when we met up when you were off of Yale? Remember how he cheated on you with the bridesmaids? He had an affair while engaged to someone else.”

“Yes, I know. I was the other half of the affair.”

“Yes, but you are not to blame.”

“Really now?”

“He conned you into it.”

“Ah…ok?! And you are getting these assumptions from where?”

“Rory, you would never willingly have a relationship with another woman’s man, that is not you.”

“Whoa, you are way out of the loop in regards to the events of my life.”

“It’s not something you would do, he took advantage of the situation when you were vulnerable.”

“What do you think of me? That I’m some mindless airhead who lets boys string me around?”

“No, I just think that he is not a good influence.”

“You know, this is vaguely familiar. You know the last I was treated this way?”

“When?”

“When we got into that car accident in high school. People were so sure that you influenced me and I followed you around like some love sick puppy. It was annoying then and it’s annoying now! And I hate to burst your bubble Jess, but I was very well aware of what I was getting into when I restarted my relationship with Logan. It was not one of my best decisions, but it nevertheless was my decision. I own it, so don’t put all of this on Logan.”

“Okay, okay. I still don’t trust the guy.”
“Why not?”

“Just a feeling.”

“A…feeling…ok.”

“Look, I admit he’s playing the part well. He’s all into the possibilities and the prospects of having the baby, of the three of you being a family. But believe me, once this kid is out and the reality sets in he is going to bolt. I know the type.”

“No Jess, that was your father.”

“You know I’m right.”

“No. I don’t. And even is he did, it is not like I would die without him. He leaves, that’s fine, I am not alone.”

“He has not shown himself trustworthy in the past.”

“Jess, if we are going to judge people on their past indiscretions, then you, my friend, are in big trouble.”

Jess was about to answer when Logan walked in the door. His annoyance at seeing Jess and Rory together was very evident.

Logan looked directly at Rory, “I heard what happened. Can we talk?” Glancing at Jess and then back to Rory, “Alone?”

"Sure, let’s go to my place.” Rory offered.

5 Minutes later, Rory and Logan are walking in the door of Rory’s apartment.

“What is he doing here?” the annoyed Logan asked.

“He was here visiting his family. Remember his mom does live here as does Luke.” The equally annoyed Rory answered.

“It seems that he has been hanging out an awful lot lately.”

“Not anymore than usual.”

“Really? You took him to the party in Philly, you mention him practically in every conversation we have, he showed up at Lane’s party, and now he is here.”

“He’s my friend and practically a relative. We’ve known each other a long time.”

“Well, I don’t like him.”

“Yes, I know, from the very beginning you didn’t like him. Why? “

“Because he still has feelings for you.”

“No he doesn’t”

“Yes, he does.”
“Well even if he did, why do you care?”

“Because he is a threat ok? He is a threat to you and me being together. He is a threat to my kid and me having a functional relationship. You being with someone else creates another complication in an already extremely complex situation. You’re unhappy about how I feel? Well that’s too bad because I don’t feel like I’m being unreasonable.”

“No you’re not. “

“So, do you have feelings for him?”

“No Logan I don’t. When I said that I am not interested in a relationship, I mean that for anyone. I do not have the mental or emotional energy to deal with anything but this baby and how we are planning to parent. That’s it.”

“Well then what is the plan? We have nothing other than the first six weeks.”

“I have thought about it. I think it would only be fair if I moved to the city. I can rent an apartment near yours and we can split the time.”

“Ok.”

“And I will look for a job.”

“So what if you can’t find one then what? What if the only thing you can find is out of the city then what?”

“I don’t know, we have to cross that bridge when we get there.”

“See, I don’t think that’s fair.”

“How is that not fair?”

“Because I have to live on pins and needles wondering what is going to happen to my family life. It would be much easier if you could just settle on something and we know where we are going.

“How?”

“I don’t know, like taking the PR job that is being handed to you?”

“I am not sure, I have my doubts that it’s going to work.”

“Why not? “

“Need I remind you what happened the last time I worked for your father? The resulted in 300 hours of community service, and thousands of dollars in lawyers fees to get my record expunged.”

“This is a totally different circumstance.”

“I want to see my other options.”

“Why are you making this harder on yourself? You take the job and then in a year, if you don’t like it then jump to something else. It’s all planned out for your Rory, I don’t understand why you won’t take this, other people would jump at the chance.”

“I never said I would not take the job, I just need to explore my options.”
Logan let out a frustrated laugh.

“What’s so funny?”

“A secure lucrative scenario is laid out for you, handed to you on a 24 karat gold platter in fact, and you still refuse it. You are one piece of work Ace.”

Rory suddenly had an epiphany, “So let me get this straight, your father and you feel I must take it because it will be good for me and our future. That taking this would be for my/our own good?”

“Yes, it’s the best scenario out there.”

“See? There! That’s it!”

“What’s it?”

“You! You and your need to take over of everything.”

“What the hell are you talking about?”

“Have you even been listening to what I’ve been saying the past year? Do you remember what I said when we said goodbye on New Hampshire? That I don’t need saving.”

“Yes, you never did need saving.”

“And yet, here you are trying to save me. Wow, I used to think it was all me but I realized in just this instant, you have as much to blame as I do!”

“Again, what the hell are you talking about?”

“Logan Huntzberger, who likes to take care of everything, that way guaranteeing that everything will go the way he wants.”

“I do not.”

“And even worse, if it does not go the way he wants, he takes his toys and goes home.”

“Now you are way off the mark.”

“Really, then why can’t you trust that I would commit to staying near you so you can be a parent huh? Why is it that the best situations are the ones you arrange? Is it for me and my own good, or is it so you don’t have to worry about you?”

Logan is silent.

“You know with you, when it comes to some of the important stuff, it’s all or nothing. You’re doing it now and you did it ten-years-ago. Did it ever occur to you that when you asked me to marry you all those years ago, if you had given me just a little bit of space, I maybe would have said yes? But no, it had to be your plan, your timetable, despite the fact that you said I should make decisions about my future for me, remember? That didn’t exactly happen now did it?”

Logan looks away as if he doesn't want Rory to see the realization on his face. “So is that the way you see it now? Do you think that I am only doing this to control you? God, I’ve become Mitchum.”

“No, you have not become your father, no I don't see this as you trying to control me. But your
inability to trust in me, to trust that I will do right by you and our kid is not sitting well with me. There are still many questions, but that does not mean that you and your family have to answer them for me. If I need help, I will ask. To be fair, I can’t blame you for just jumping in. You took care of a lot when we were together, you let me live in your apartment rent free when we were at Yale, you practically paid for everything during college, then you financed some my traveling to London. It was a weird dynamic we fell into. It’s something that I don’t feel comfortable doing anymore.”

“It’s because I love you Rory. You never needed anything from me, and because of that I wanted to give you everything. I still want to give you everything.”

“Well, everything at this moment would mean space.”

“I just need to know, are we done? Do you not love me?”

“I can’t answer that question for you or anyone. Right now that door is closed. It's not locked, just closed.”

“And you have no idea when it will be open again?”

“I don’t know when it will open again, and when it does I can’t promise it will be you that I will seek. It all a mystery now. It's your choice to wait Logan and how long you are willing to wait is entirely up to you.”

"Fine. Then I have to trust that you will do the right thing."

"Yes, you do."

Letting out a frustrated sigh, "I'm scared Rory. I don't want to mess this up. How am I to know it will be ok?"

"You don’t. It's called a leap of faith."

"You jump you, I jump Jack."

"Exactly."

"I am still not 100% convinced."

"You have nothing to worry about."

"How do I know that? People make promises all the time."

"Yes, but I am a Gilmore. Gilmores keep their promises."
Third Trimester: Unfinished

Chapter Summary

It's four weeks until Rory's due date and she's transitioning back to life in Star Hallow. How will a conversation with Jess and an unexpected person change her life?

Chapter Notes

More confused Rory. I am feeling confused right now and it's coming out in my writing. Enjoy and thanks for reading.

Unfinished

It was the last day of work for Rory. As she sat in her office amongst the boxes and stacks of files looking out at the hustle and bustle of Fifth Avenue, she felt a but melancholy. She was satisfied with the work that she did over the past six months, happy to have had the opportunity to immerse herself in something interesting and real. She was grateful for the opportunity to work with such creative, interesting and passionate people. She was also sad because she was going to miss the people, this job, everything that had to do with this life.

“As you know, this is Rory’s last day.” Moses announced at the end of their last status meeting earlier this morning, “I just wanted to say on behalf of everyone here how grateful we are for all the quality work you did this past 6 months. Your ability to just pick up and run with the project was instrumental in helping us get it to this point and on time and a smidgen over budget. We will miss you Rory.”

“I’m going to miss you too! This was the most fun I have had in a long time.” Rory felt herself start to tear up.

While she knew she would miss her job, she had other things to look forward to, namely the birth of her baby. With the due date five weeks away, there was a long list of things, both baby related and not baby related, to accomplish. Going through her calendar, Rory crossed off an appointment earlier this week where she and Logan finalize custody and support arrangements with their lawyers. It was a fairly easy negotiation, as they both had pretty much the same attitude toward parenthood. Logan, having been raised in a more formal environment, planned to be a more hands-on parent, while Rory wanted to ensure some regularity and structure. They both agreed that they would employ a live-out nanny, who would travel with the child wherever s/he was staying. They also agreed to split their time with the baby; two nights with Rory, two with Logan, with alternating weekends Friday-Sunday. They agreed on child support, splitting the expenses in proportion to their income. They also decided on little issues such as vacations (one dedicated 10 day period for each parent every year), holidays (Christmas, Thanksgiving, New Years, and Easter would be switched off every year ) and birthdays (always celebrated together.) Other issues like medical directives,
guardianship (Honor primary/Lane secondary), and schooling (no boarding school during elementary years, afterward it’s up for discussion with child input) were also addressed and resolved.

Rory was also in the process of transitioning responsibility of the Stars Hallow Gazette to the new editor. It wasn’t hard, as Rory was pretty much hands off for the past six months. Under the guidance of the daily editor, the Gazette grew into a regional literary publication. The popularity became so much that Taylor moved to sponsor the first ever Star Hallow Literary Festival later that summer.

Then there was her book, a project she was very eager to finish. Reading her current version with fresh eyes made her realize that Doyle was right, she was missing from the pages. With new insight, thanks to the conversation with her father, she had more than a few ideas on how to raise the volume of her voice in the book.

Rounding off her task list was getting ready for the baby. There was so much to be done, and so little time it seemed. The shower thrown by Shira Huntzberger was pleasant enough. Rory got to meet some of Logan’s relatives and was able finally to establish a civil relationship with Shira. The gift yielded from the shower were beautiful, albeit not very practical. She got some needed gifts (stroller, car seat, glider rockers) and some not so needed (designer, wash in delicate, clothes.) “Don’t worry, you will be ready, I will help you.” Lorelai assured Rory last week during lunch. Yet, despite this assurance, Rory was nervous, as time seemed to be running out quickly.

As she gathered her items in a box, a phone call came in from a London exchange that she recognized but couldn’t identify for certain. After a quick debate with herself on whether or not to answer the phone, she picked up on the 8th ring, “Hello, this is Rory Gilmore” she greeted.

“Rory, darling…” Rory recognized the voice right away and immediately wished she let it go to voice mail, “…it’s me!”

“I’m sorry the connection is bad, whom and I speaking with.”

“It’s Naomi…Naomi Shropshire!”

“Oh…Naomi…good and a bit surprising to hear from you.”

"Darling I will be in the States. I am arriving tomorrow and will be staying for 10 days Is there any way we can meet?”

“Regarding what? During our last contact you seemed to want nothing to do with me.”

“Yes, well horrible the way things ended with us…somethings have come into light…I just want to clear the air.”

“Well, my schedule is very limited…”

“I will be arriving in New York tomorrow. Monday in New York?”

“I’m sorry I have appointments that day.”

“How about in the evening?”

“Evenings do not work for me as I am about 1 1/2 to 2 hours away from the city.”

“Well, can we meet half way? Or I can come to you. Whatever works.”
Naomi wants to come to me?!? Rory was suspicious, however having nothing to lose, Rory played her advantage.

“I may have time later in the week. I will need to call you back with my schedule.”

The following Sunday morning found Rory sitting at the counter at Lukes, staring at her phone. “Morning kid,” Lorelai greeted as she sat down next to Rory.

“I just called her” Rory informed her mother.

“Who? Naomi?”

“Yes.”

“What did she want?”

“She didn’t say. It’s on a ‘need to know’ basis. All I know is that we are meeting in the New Haven on Tuesday.”

“Ah, your old stomping ground. Get her on your turf, good thinking!”

“Well, not so much. She will be there anyway for a meeting with some of the faculty at Yale. It’s good, it will be nice to go back. I haven’t been there in so long.”

“Where are you meeting?”

“Rich Man’s Shoe. It’s a pub so she should feel at home.”

“Just remember to have your exit strategy ready.”

A mug of coffee and a glass of milk suddenly appeared in front of Rory and Lorelai. They looked up nd saw Jess standing behind the counter, “How are you this morning ladies? What can I get you?”

“What are you doing here?” the surprised Rory asked.

“Liz and TJ are gearing up for the Renaissance circuit and I am helping them get ready.”

“Really? You never showed an interest in helping them before.” Lorelai cautiously asked.

“Well, this year I have time,” Jess assured her.

“Well, that’s…convenient.” Lorelai replied suspiciously.

“So where are Liz and TJ going?” Rory asked oblivious to the intensity of Lorelai and Jess’ exchange.

“They are starting off in Tennessee and touring the south. That region always has their fairs early in the season before it gets too hot.”

“Good idea.” said Rory.

“Hey, can I talk to you?” Jess asked.

“Sure.”
Jess and Rory leave the counter and go to the table in the corner.

“So what’s up?” asked Rory.

“I… I wanted to apologize for our last conversation.”

“Oh, well thank you.”

“I don’t trust Logan, and after that story about his parents ambushing Lorelai and your grandmothers, it made me more leery of him. But, you know him best and if you can trust him, then we all have to learn to take your lead. I didn’t mean to imply that he was leading you around by the nose or that you could not discern what’s wrong or right for you.”

“It really ok Jess. This situation has been stressful and unexpected for everyone.”

“Yes, but I should not be adding to that stress, so mea culpa.”

“Well, thank you again.”

“So, I have something for you.” Jess got up and grabbed a bag from behind the counter and then returned and gave it to Rory. Rory opened it to find two books.

“Goldilocks and the Three Dinosaurs” and Knuffle Bunny.”

“Or K-Nuffle Bunny, depending on who you talk to. These are by Mo Willems. He’s the Moliere of the Children’s Literature world.”

“Yes, I’ve seen his stuff in the bookstore. Doesn’t he also write about a mischievous pigeon?”

“Yes, that is him.”

“Aww, thank you, Jess!” Rory got up hugged Jess and kissed on the cheek.

“I’m excited for you to read those books to the baby. They’re really funny.”

“Well leave it to you to push the literature.”

“You have to get it in before the kid is old enough to swipe on his/her phone.”

“Am I setting myself up for failure if I say that I will not let this kid watch TV or use any electronics until age 2.”

“Probably, but you should attempt it anyway.”

“Oh, there is so much still to do. I am in the process of transitioning the Gazette and now I have time to work on the book.”

“You gain any insight since the last time we talked?”

“Yes. Doyle, my editor from Yale, told me that there wasn’t enough of me in the book. I reread it and he was right, there wasn’t. So I am going to write more about the positives and negatives of being a kid of a single parent.”

“Long and suffering?”

“No, Mom and I are best friends, I had the support of many people; Mia, Sookie, Luke, everyone.
But I also missed my dad. You know on those days when I am feeling really Freudian, I wonder if all the questionable choice I made with relationships are related to him, other times I feel, Eh, it's ok."

“So no crying whoa is me.”

“No. I am hoping to be analytic. My dad and I had a long talk about his absence and I learned some things about him and his family. Based on that I think yes, maybe it was better that my mom raised me alone. Being tangled in that situation may have made my life worse.”

“That must have been some conversation.”

“It was very enlightening.”

“You never gave me the impression that there was anything missing in your life.”

“It’s not like I never saw my dad or we had an acrimonious relationship; Mom worked hard to make sure he was always welcomed in my life and we did see each other fairly regularly when I was young. But then, I was always surrounded by people when I was younger because we lived at the Inn, so I was never lonely or in need of adult nurturing. And then he moved to California when I was 10 and we moved from the Inn to our house. My contact with him dwindled to phone calls and holidays. That and having less people around, I think that’s when I really started feeling his absence. It wasn’t like I was crying all the time missing him, but when he did show up I was always happy to see him, and missed him terribly when he left. I do remember one time, it was around Sookie and Jackson’s wedding, when he and my mom almost got together, but then he found out about Gigi and went to marry Sherry instead.”

“No co-parenting then huh?”

“Nope.”

“Sookie and Jackson’s wedding, yes I remember that day.”

“Oh, yes” Rory remembered as well and started to blush.

“We’ve known each other a long time”

“Over 15 years.”

“Lots of ups and downs.”

“Yes, but mostly ups”

“And huge downs.”

“But lately all ups.”

“We’ve come a long way.”

“We sure have.”

Rory looked at Jess and felt a sudden wave of emotion. It was a feeling of happiness, love, gratefulness, and appreciation for this person who has been in her life for so long, a person who had seen her through many good and bad time, who always knows just the right things to say at the right moment. He smiled back at her, seeing the person who had shown him that there was life beyond the lonely, angry walls that he had placed around himself; that happiness wasn’t some concept that
was used to move a story forward, that there was hope for better in life. He grabbed her hand and gave it a squeeze, and she smiled at him.

…And then his phone rang.

It was TJ, looking for Jess as he was ready to start packing up for the Faire.

“I have to go.” Jess said a little disappointed.

“Ok, well will I see you later?”

“I’m on the 3:30 train back to Philly.”

“Ok, well call me.”

“I will.”

Rory watched Jess leave the diner. She turned toward the counter to see Luke and Lorelai staring at her, “What’s going on?”

“Oh…nothing” They both respond clumsily at the same time.

“Well, I have things to do, see you later!”

“Ok, hun.” said Lorelai.

As soon as Rory exits the door Lorelai and Luke exhale and look at each other worriedly.

Later that day Luke was driving Jess to the train station in Hartford. Having spent the last day and a half with Liz and TJ, Jess was more than ready to leave town.

“So did TJ work you hard?”

“You know TJ, asks you to help him with something, then all of a sudden there is a phone call, or something hurts, or he has to help Doula with something, same ‘ole story.”

“Well it was good of you to help.”

“He makes Liz happy and Doula loves him so he can’t be all that bad.”

“Yea…so you and Rory seemed a bit cozy this morning.”

“What do you mean?”

“It’s just you two were engaged in a pretty intense conversation,”

“You noticed that?”

“Everyone noticed!”

“Well, we’ve known each other for a long time, and we’ve gotten to a good place in our relationship. We are both happy about it.”
“And in "relationship" you mean…”

“We are friends Luke.”

“And you don’t want more?”

“… Eh… no…” Jess said unconvincingly

“Well that sounds convincing.”

“Why do you care?”

“We are concerned…”

‘We? Who is ‘We’?”

“Lorelai and Me.”

“Lorelai? Lorelai?! What is she scared that I am going after Rory again?”

“Jess…”

“She’s afraid that I’m going to break her baby girl’s heart?”

“As a matter-a-fact SHE is not our concern, YOU are!”

Jess is dumbstruck, “excuse me?”

“Look”, Luke explains, “you know I love Rory as my own. She has always been a great kid and is an exceptional human being. But, she is a complete mess right now. I mean with the baby, and Logan, and having an affair with Logan while he was engaged, and her dating that guy whose name and face no one can remember, not having a permanent job, and now having to start this whole new life. It’s a lot for her, and it would be a lot for another person to handle.”

“That person would be me?”

“Yes, you.”

“I’m a big boy Luke.”

“Rory is in no shape to be in a relationship. She is not interested in being in any sort of romantic relationship right now. To me, that’s a good thing. She has a lot more pressing matters to address. I would just hate for you to wait for her, only to be disappointed.”

“Who says I am ‘waiting’ for her?”

“Well, you haven’t been exactly been burning up the dating scene.”

“Well, I just don’t go out and date anyone. You were not exactly burning the dating scene. In fact, you were in love with Lorelai for years before you got together!”

“Yes, but I got out there. And in fact, YOU were the one who got me to get out there. Nicole? Remember her?”

“And see how that worked out.”

“My point is, you have not tried to see if there is someone else out there. We are wondering is it
really because you have feelings for Rory or are you just afraid to get out there? I mean you have women throwing themselves at you left and right and you are oblivious to that.”

“No, I don’t.”

Luke smirks, “Ah, yes you do. We, that is Lorelai and I, don’t want to you to get your heart broken.”

“Who are these women?”

“For one, Penny, that dancer friend of yours. She’s really nice, cute, very smart. She can go toe to toe with you.”

“We’re friends, good friends.”

“I have a feeling that she would like to be more than friends.”

Jess is quiet.

“In all honesty? I don’t know how I feel about Rory. I mean, I love her. I can see a future with us, but I how to make it work is where it gets murky. It’s just, I don’t trust Logan, and I don’t want him to hurt her.”

“When did it become your job to protect her? If there is anyone who can take care of herself, it’s Rory. You have to remember something also, Logan is in love with her as well. If she told him she felt the same way that would be the end of you. They are a family, so he has a big advantage.”

“So you think I should just move on?”

“If you and Rory are meant to be, it will happen, I firmly believe that. But in the meantime, I don’t want you to close yourself off. You deserve to be able to explore your options as well. You say yourself you are not sure how you feel, perhaps some exploration will give you clarity. But the way you are going now? If it doesn’t work out you are setting yourself up for a world of hurt.”

“Ok, I will think about what you said.”

“Really?”

“Yes, really…thanks Luke. Thanks for caring.”

Tuesday morning found Rory roaming the Yale campus. Exams ended the week prior, and except for the star and a few stragglers, Yale was a virtual ghost town. Rory liked it this way, being able to walk quietly among the buildings. She walked by her study tree, the trash can that replaced the bench where her Grandpa proposed to her Grandma, past the Daily News building, and the political science building, the Planetarium, which housed Gilmore Hall (she luckily talked her grandparents out of naming it after Rory.) She walked past the courtyard where her favorite coffee cart was always parked, and Brandford where she lived freshman and sophomore year. This is where I met Logan for the first time, she thought, and this is where we had our first confrontation, this is the dining hall where we sneaked in after our first official date. Upon passing the Taft building, her old apartment building, she realized that most of her memories were tied to Logan.

She arrived at Rich Man’s Shoe, another Logan hangout, a bit early for her appointment so she could
mentally prepare. Rory thought about the last time she saw Naomi. She was drunk, and not coherent. She talked about writing a children’s book about Rabbits and Whales (or was it an elephant?) and wanted to kiss Rory’s “sweet apple cheeks”. People had warned her about Naomi, how brilliant yet difficult she could be. Rory saw a glimpse of this when she did her interviews and subsequent research for her article in *The New Yorker*, but was willing to withstand her eccentricities for the sake of the opportunity to work on her biography. In the end, it wasn't worth it, Rory knew that for sure now. All that happened a little over a year ago, a lifetime ago. What a difference a year makes.

“Rorrrry dahling” Rory, heard from behind. She turned to see Naomi, dressed in a yellow printed 50 style dress and perfectly coiffed hair. Rory thought it made her look like Lucy Ricardo. Rory stood up to greet Naomi, making her stop in her tracks. “Oh my God!” Naomi exclaimed, looking and pointing at Rory’s bursting belly, “You’re with child!”

“Yes, I am. Hi Naomi, it’s good to see you.”

They both sat down. “I’m just shocked, completely shocked.”

“Well, that makes two of us.”

“So are you married now?”

“No, the father and I are co-parenting.”

“Are you devastated that he is not marrying you because you shouldn't be.’

Trying to contain her annoyance, Rory changed the subject, “Naomi, why are we here?”

“Oh yes. Well, first of all, I would like to apologize for my horrible behavior last year. I was not in a good place, not at all.”

“Oh, well thank you. I am sorry that you were not in a good place.”

“Well, it had been happening for a while. I really hit rock bottom last year. Then I joined the Grace Belgravia Wellness club and started meditation. I tell you it has changed my life! I and am slowly working my way back.”

“Ok.”

“There is a book coming out about me.”

“Oh, really?”

“An unauthorized biography. The writer is someone I met with once or twice. It didn’t work, but she decided to do the book anyway. I am afraid it will not tell the whole story. Anyway, my sources tell me she is already getting offers so it is sure to be published. I would like to put out my own book to counterpoint it.”

“Ok, so why don’t you.”

“Because I want you to write it,”

“Me?!!! Um, I seem to remember you FIRED me. And really you did not fire me, but your lawyer did.”

“Yes, I know, and I am so sorry for that. Part of my healing process is to face my wrongs, and I
wronged you Rory, I so wronged you.”

“Ooo-kay…”

“Anyway, after you, I tried other writers, but no one could capture the essence of me, better than you can. And, I must confess, with new biography coming out I would like it on the shelves straight away.”

“In right away, how quickly do you want it?”

“A reasonable draft by the end of the year, hopefully published by spring of next year.”

“Wow, that timeline is fast.”

“Yes, it is.”

“I don’t know Naomi. I am in no shape to work on this right now. I am due in over three weeks, and I don’t think I can start working on this until the end of August.”

“You have a lot of research already done, so it won’t be as hard as you think.”

“Does this mean traveling to London?”

“On occasion... and other places on the Continent...depends on my schedule.”

“But the baby…”

“Oh, bring her/him with. I mean it's London, we have the best nannies.”

“I don’t know…”

“Did I tell you that The New Yorker is still interested in printing excerpts of the book?”

“No, you didn’t.”

“Well, they are. This could be a golden opportunity for you Rory.”

“Yes, it could. I’ll think about it.”

Lorelai was absolutely floored when Rory told her the news. As they sat on the wicker couch on Luke and Lorelei’s front porch, Lorelai excitedly inquired, “So are you going to take it?”

“I don’t know, probably not.”

“Why not?”

“Because of all the traveling and the logistics. How are Logan and I suppose to successfully do joint custody if I am out of the country?”

“Could he move back to London temporarily?”

“I don’t know, but I can’t ask him to do that.”
“You can leave the baby here.”

“That is not an option either.”

“I don’t know Rory. This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. This could open so many doors for you. Get that journalism career back on track.”

“That’s the problem, it could. There are many things I can do that could lead to something. I cannot afford to live on the hopes of something that could; I need to focus on what is.”

“And a biography on Naomi Shropshire is not an is?”

“No, it’s an is, but a temporary is. A potentially big is, but nevertheless temporary. Plus, the woman is so unpredictable. How do I know she won’t change her mind at the last minute? I need a definite, permanent is… but it would be so cool.”

“The coolest!”

“Argh, being an adult sucks!”

“Yes, but you can drink legally...well not for you, but soon!”

“Tell me what to do mom.”

“Honey, I can’t do that. I will be happy to listen, but you have to ultimately make the decision. When does she want to know?”

“She said she would give me until August to commit. She is still interviewing other people, but I am her first choice.”

“So, this is a “the job is your unless I find someone else” kinda deal? Weird.”

“I know.” Rory text alert went off, “Oh, it’s Logan. He’s at the apartment, I have to go. Don’t tell him about this please?”

“I won’t”

Rory leaned over and kissed her mother goodbye, “Lunch tomorrow?” Rory asked.

“Lunch tomorrow,” Lorelai answered.
Third Trimester: The "Plan A" We Never Dared to Dream

Chapter Summary

The day has finally arrived!

* I added dialogue.

* I expanded the chapter.

Chapter Notes

Labor and delivery can be a tricky thing to write. Hope it's not too schmaltzy.

As always thanks for reading, especially to those who made comments. I tried to reply, but it only works for some people.
(Technology, great when it works!)

Enjoy!

The "Plan A" We Never Dared to Dream

Rory arrived at her building to find Logan waiting patiently by the door. “Hey you, welcome back!” she greeted, giving him a chaste kiss on the cheek (now Rory and Logan’s customary greeting.) “Ready to have me invade your space?” Logan asked brightly.

“Well, it’s not like we haven’t lived together before.”

“Yes, but that was in a different context.”

“Sure, but how hard can it be?”

Logan gathered up his stuff and followed Rory inside. With the due date fast approaching, and the idea of anything can happen at any time, Rory and Logan agreed that this would be a good time as any for him to move in. Because of the plan and Logan’s intention to take eight weeks off for paternity leave, Logan ended up putting in more hours and traveling than usual the last month. Today he had just gotten back from his last business trip before taking his leave.

Rory rearranged her apartment so to accommodate him as much as she could. She cleared out a couple of dresser drawers and space in the closet, she made sure to stock the kitchen with his favorite snacks and bought a blender. She also made sure to get his preferred brand of soap, shampoo, and toothpaste and place an extra cup in the bathroom. Not wanting to banish him to the couch, Rory moved in the trundle bed from her room at Luke and Lorelai’s house and placed a screen around it
By the second day, Rory and Logan had fallen into a routine. Logan would get up first to go running, while Rory would get up a few minutes later to make coffee for herself and a smoothie for him. They would then have a quick breakfast together before going their separate ways. Thanks to Luke, Logan was able to set up a temporary office in the apartment above the diner, while Rory stayed home to work on her book and to help with The Gazette. They always had lunch together be it at Luke’s, or the Inn, or with one of them going to their respective workplace with a sandwich. Dinners were pretty much always at the Diner or at Luke and Lorelei’s house. Most of the time they were joined by friends or neighbors. Evenings were spent with the two of them together doing a task or two to prepare for the baby or just relaxing by reading or watching TV or a movie. On more than one occasion they found themselves awakened at 2 or 3 am curled up together on the couch after falling asleep with watching TV. “Enjoy the freedom and peace while you can,” everyone would tell them with a laugh, “your life will never be the same.”

By the end of week 38, Rory was done with being pregnant. She did everything she could to spur on labor; adding tons of sriracha and other hot spices to her food, swallowing castor oil, and going for long walks every day. “You know there is another way we can induce labor,” Logan half-joked one night as he was massaged Rory’s feet. “HA! You touch me and I’ll cut you Huntzberger!” She half-joked back, “You’re the reason I’m in this situation in the first place!”

On the second Sunday before her due date, Rory and Logan were taking a post-lunch walk when Miss Patty flagged them down. “Hello, there you two. How’s it going?”

“Oh, you know, we’re doing well. Just impatient and excited.”

“Oh, I can imagine. Logan sweetheart, I was wondering if you could help me? Some boxes of costumes were delivered to the studio yesterday when I wasn’t there and the delivery person put them in the wrong place. I can’t move them because of my knee, could you perhaps lend and strong helping hand?” she asked flirtatiously.

“For you, anything .” Logan replied

“Well if that’s your offer…”

Rory and Logan followed Miss Patty to her studio. She opened the door and let them in first. Suddenly the light flipped on and they heard the roar of “SURPRISE!!!!” It took Rory and Logan a minute or two get over the shock. They looked around Miss Patty’s studio to see their families and close friends all gathered for a baby shower. They were immediately led to two chairs in the middle of the room, where they sat while Lorelai welcomed them and people began to make speeches. While this happened Rory and Logan surveyed the guest in the room. There, of course, were the Stars Hallow people, along with Sookie and Jackson and Family, Lane Zach and the boys, Mr. and Mrs. Kim, and Brian and Gill and his family. Michele and Fredrick were there also with their daughter Camilla. Emily was there as well, having driven in with Christopher, Francine, and Gigi. April came in from Boston, along with her girlfriend Selah, while Colin and Finn also joined in on the fun. Paris, Doyle and their kids were there along with their surprise guests Madeline and Louise, while Mitchum and Shira, Honor, Josh and their kids, and a number of Logan’s other relatives rounded out the crowd.

The party, which lasted the bulk of the afternoon, was filled with food, funny childhood stories of both Rory and Logan, games and activities (including the perennial favorite, painting your own onesie), music and dancing. By the end of the party, the exhausted Rory and Logan went home with
every baby item they could use and then some. Looking around the apartment, Logan and Rory
could not help but laugh. “It looks like a “Babies R Us” exploded in here” Logan marveled.

“I know. Where are we going to put all of this?” Rory wondered.

“Well, for now, we can just box them up. I can take half, and you can take half.”

Rory, having been so caught up in their present domestic state, forgot that she and Logan were going
their separate ways in a few weeks. The thought made her stomach flutter.

“Yes, we should. Maybe my mom can put them in storage, or maybe we can store them at your
parent’s house. God knows they have the room.”

“Hey, how about Mitchum dancing with Miss Patty and Babette? I wonder if he’ll ever recover?”
Logan asked.

“He didn’t look like he was suffering that much.

"How about Colin and Finn with your friends Madeline and Louise?"

"Oh God, if any love connections come out of that interaction, I think that would be the sign of the
apocalypse."

"You should warn Madeline and Louise about them."

"No, I assure you, if there is anyone who needs warning, it's Colin and Finn."

Rory sat down next to Logan on the couch.

“Twelve days,” she implored.

“Yep,” Logan replied with a sigh.

“How are you feeling?”

“To be honest, it hasn’t fully hit me yet. I think it’s part denial. If I stopped and really considered the
full gravity of what is about to happen I think I might freak out."

“Yes, I get it. One day at a time.”

“So do you realize what day it is?”

“It’s June 25th.”

“Yes it is. Do you remember what happened two years ago on this very day?”

After a minute it dawned on her.

“Oh my God, we reconnected in Hamburg two years ago.”

“That we did!”

“Wow,” Rory said, remembering the events of that day.
“That was the day that started it all.”

Rory let out a little laugh.

“What so funny?” asked Logan

“Bad weather in New York. To think that was the reason why we ran into each other in Hamburg. Can you imagine what life would be like if the weather was clear?”

“You know, I can’t imagine. I have no inclining of what life would be like if we didn’t run into each other, except I probably would be somewhere miserable as hell.”

“Really? You were engaged. Not settled in London with Odette?”

“Ah but remember, Odette left to be with someone else. That situation was out of my hands.”

“Oh yes, I forgot...how could I forget...”

“Eh, it was all for the best anyway...” Logan said, looking as though he were replaying a memory in his mind.

Rory watched him for a moment, "Hey, what are you thinking?"

The expression on Logan's face turned from pensive to an embarrassed grin, "I was just thinking about that morning when I came home and walked in on Odette and Benoit in the kitchen."

“That must have been horrible."

“It was quite a shock.”

“How did you feel at the time?”

“Shocked, then disbelief, and a bit of relief. And then anger and envy.”

“Anger and envy? That Benoit had Odette and you didn’t?”

“No. That Benoit knew what he wanted and had the courage to go after it. That took balls you know? I wondered, why couldn’t I do that?”

“Well, there were mitigating circumstances..."

"Yea. Anyway, say that things did go as planned. Yes, life would certainly be different, but not better.”

“You think so?”

“I do. These past two years have been quite a roller coaster, but I wouldn’t have had it any other way if it meant this would happen. I am happy to be here, right now, with you.”

Rory smiled at the thought and then looked at Logan and replied, “It’s the ‘Plan A’ we never dared to dream.”

Rory and Logan continued to look at each other with deep affection. She felt his one hand wrap around hers, while the other brushed strands of hair away from her face. He thought about how beautiful she was and how badly he wanted to kiss her. He was about to do so when the expression on her face changed to surprise and slight terror.
“Ace? What’s wrong?”

“My water just broke.”

“Don't worry Mamma’s coming!!!!!!” Lorelai yelled as she ran from her house and jumped into the back seat of Logan’s car. While the drive to the hospital was typically 30 minutes, for the nervous and adrenaline pump Logan, it took only 15. Later when asked to reflect on the whole experience of labor and delivery Rory would describe it as profound, yet traumatic with a bit of Monty Python. There were moments during the ride to the hospital and their time in triage when nervous energy sent her, Logan, and Lorelai into extremes of laughter and utter panic. There was Rory's feeling of sheer terror when informed that she was too far gone so she could not get an epidural, and how grateful she felt for the encouragement and care Logan and Lorelai provided as she fought through every labor pain.

While she felt like it was for much longer, in the end, her labor only lasted for two and a half hours. Just a little before midnight Dr. Miller informed her it was time to push.

And like that, it was over before she knew it. After three pushes Rory felt the stage sensation of being completely emptied. She watched as the doctor placed a bundle covered with a blanket on her chest. She looked to see her baby open its eyes and looks straight into her soul and start to wail.

“Oh my God” The weeping Lorelai exclaimed, “He’s just so beautiful!”

_He_, Rory thought to herself. _HE...I have a son._

Rory felt Logan kiss on the head and watched as he cut the umbilical cord. While the delivery team continued their work cleaning-up both Rory and the baby, Rory took the moment to lie back and feel her exhaustion. Logan went back to Rory, wrapped his arms around her and gave her another quick kiss. “You did it Ace... “ He whispered to her proudly, “…and you were amazing.”

Lorelai, who left Rory’s side to help the nurses tend to the baby, returned with him in hand. She gingerly put him in Rory’s arms and sat down to admire her daughter and her child; it made her tear up more.

Cradling her baby, Rory breathed him in, "Hello there." she said. Never in her life had she felt this happy and content. Everything was as it was supposed to be. Rory vowed to herself that she would remember every detail of this day, even the parts that really really sucked.
Fourth Trimester: Postpartum Pardons

Chapter Summary

Rory and Logan adjust to life as new parents. What does this mean for them as co-parents? How will Rory's career decisions affect her and their relationship?

Also, surprises ahead for Paris, we see a little more of Jess, and an update on Madeline and Louise.

Chapter Notes

In pregnancy circles, the time after a baby is born is often referred to as 'The Fourth Trimester'. The adjustment in the days, week, or even months after babies are born can be really tough, especially for parents in the US.

There is a very involved discussion about women and parenthood in this chapter. I confess, this passage was heavily influenced by my involvement in the Women's March this past weekend.

As always, thank you for reading. Again, please excuse the typos. Enjoy and I welcome your comments.

Post-Partum Pardons

It was well past noon the next day when Rory and Logan finally woke up. Having delivered so late in the night, they finally were able to fall asleep around 3 am. Lorelai had left around 2 am, leaving them alone to enjoy their baby and to “keep the relatives at bay.” Before parting, she warned them, “Do NOT let anyone know you had the baby before you are well rested and ready.”

Rory and Logan took their time to ready themselves for the onslaught of relatives, making sure to eat and wash up before making phone calls. Within an hour of placing those calls, the relatives began to arrive. Lorelai, Luke, April, and Selah were first, bearing bags of food and flowers, followed by Mitchum, Shira, and Honor. Christopher, Gigi, Francine, and Emily arrived soon after. Christopher was the last to walk in the room, where he beelined to his daughter who was in sitting bed, “Hi Dad” she greeted, motioning to Emily to hand the baby over to Christopher. As Christopher held the baby, Rory made the introductions, “Dad, I would like you to meet Hayden Richard Gilmore-Huntzberger, Hayden this is your Grandpa Chris.”

Christopher looked at Rory happily stunned, “Really?” he confirmed.

“I figured this generation should have more than just a few facial features.”

The rest of the afternoon was a flurry of activity of relatives coming and going. The baby was
passed around so much that Rory only saw him when it was time to feed. At around 6 pm, Mitchum rounded everyone up to take them all out for a celebratory dinner. Lorelai volunteered to stay behind with Rory. Upon shutting the door after the last person she exclaimed, “Finally! I thought they would never leave!”

“So much activity and partying lately. I can’t wait for quiet.”

“Oh, honey you’re a mother now. It will never be quiet again.”

“Thanks, that makes me feel so great,” Rory deadpanned.

“You did great kid. Such grace under pressure. Me? I was screaming bloody murder the whole time.”

“Well, I had a great support system. Thanks, Mom, thanks for everything. I wouldn’t have made it without you.”

“Of course you would have, but yes, anytime. Thank you for letting me be part of this. Definitely in the top four coolest experiences ever.”

“Top four?”

“Yes, behind your birth, marrying Luke, and sneaking onto the main floor during the Duran Duran and being hit by Simon LeBon’s sweat.”

“Eww, I would hope that Hayden’s birth comes before Simon’s sweat.”

“Depends on his his level of worship of the great Czarina Lorelai.”

“Czarina? Really?”

“I think it has a nice ring to it. So Hayden huh? That was nice.”

“I thought of it after that talk I had with Dad. I was happy when Logan agreed. Really, that kid, name wise at least, is all Gilmore.”

“As it should be.” Lorelai said mockingly maniacal, “So question, what would you have named the baby if she was a she?”

“Lorelai”

“Really?”

“Yes, surprisingly enough, Logan really wanted to continue it the tradition. He likes the name and plus the fact that it would annoy certain members of his family was an added bonus.”

“Lorelai, what would you have called her?”

“Lora maybe.”

“Lorelai, Rory, Lora. Huh. Middle name continue that tradition too?”

“Yes, it's only fitting.”

“So in continuing the tradition of honoring the non-Lorelai side, I am Lorelai Victoria after Grandpa Charles’ mother, you are Lorelai Leigh after mom’s mother, and imaginary granddaughter would
have been?”

“Lorelai Nadine.

"Nadine? Who was Nadine? Shira or Mitchum's mother?"

"Shira"

Shira’s mother’s name was Nadine? Really? Huh, kinda badass.”

“Isn’t it though? Logan really liked her. Apparently, she was rather charming, irreverent, and fun.”

“Oh well, you can save that for the next time.”

“Mom, I just delivered less than 24 hours ago. Please don’t start talking about the next time, there may never be a next time.”

“A Czarina can dream, can’t she? This grandkid thing is pretty addicting.”

Two days later, Rory, Logan, and baby Hayden were headed home. Rory had mixed feelings about leaving the hospital. While she was happy to be able to be home, it meant leaving the safe confines of 24-hour care. She had been told and read about how hard an adjustment a new baby could be, but nothing prepared her for this. Rory and Logan found that every cliche, every comedic portrayal, every dramatic moment associated with being a parent to a newborn was true and then some. The combination of an adjusting baby and parental hypersensitivity made for many tense times. Added to Rory’s stress were her post-partum hormones which sent Rory into crying fits, extreme fatigue, and insomnia. The hard adjustments happened in things that were unexpected; leaving the apartment just to go on a simple errand became a production, everyday baby materials such as diapers, wipes, clothes, carriers, strollers, and such took up more room than expected. Everyday things that they took for granted such as clean laundry, washed dishes, even taking a shower became lost. Both were so grateful for Luke and Lorelei’s help. Luke provided a steady stream of meals, while Lorelai went to work late, making sure that Rory and Logan could get a decent amount of sleep. In the afternoons after work she and Luke would take the baby for a walk, assigning the new parents activities to help get them back on track (“We’ll be back in an hour or so. Take that time to clean up the dishes, put away the laundry, or take a shower!”)

By the time Hayden turned a month old, Rory and Logan had adjusted into a solid routine. Hayden would get up early in the morning around 5:30 am, fall asleep again around 9 am, wake at 11 am and then fall asleep again at 2 pm. He would then wake at 4 pm and then fall asleep again for the night at 8 pm, waking up for a night feeding and change between midnight and 1 am. Rory and Logan split their time, with Rory staying up to do the late night duties, and Logan taking care of the early morning. With Hayden’s schedule becoming somewhat predictable, Logan and Rory fell into a routine. Logan made sure to have breakfast for ready Rory every morning while Rory would make sure Logan had time to run or go to the gym in the afternoons. At night before putting Hayden to bed, the three of them would curl up on the couch and read books ranging from Sandra Boyton to Mo Willems, to Huckleberry Finn to Far Side comics. While Hayden napped or was in the care of someone else, their time would be spent on everyday household duties; laundry, paying bills, as well as running errands, and doctors’ appointments. Late night allowed Rory to work on her book, while morning naps allowed Logan relax and read.

It was during that month milestone that Rory and Logan felt ready to venture beyond Stars Hallow and to New York City. With the end of Logan’s leave fast approaching, the realities of life outside
of their new parent bubble began to creep in. For Logan, this meant not only getting mentally prepared to of back to work but also finding a bigger apartment in his Tribeca neighborhood so to stay within walking distance of work. Rory’s list was more daunting. Along with finding a place to live and finding a job, Rory also had to deal with the intricacies and realities of her personal financial situation. Between living simply in Stars Hallow and Paris and Doyle’s place in New York, Rory was able to save a fair amount of her salary from her job and MN Designs. She had meetings planned in the days ahead with Emily and her lawyers and financial advisors to discuss how to tap in and use her trust funds set up by both Richard and her Great Grandmother Lorelai I. It was during those meetings she learned that with the money in her trust fund, Rory would be able to put down a sizable down payment on a decent apartment, with enough money to spare to have her live up to a year. Although she did not want to use up so much of the proceeds of her trust, it was what she needed to do.

Then there was childcare, perhaps the most eye-opening issue of all. The cost of a full-time Nanny, which involved not only salary, but also employer taxes, social security, and other miscellaneous expense rivaled the rent of a one bedroom apartment. “$45K/ year?!?!” Rory texted Paris when she learned the average number, “45? For a totally legal childcare? That’s cheap.” she texted back.

“Really?” Rory texted back.

“You could pay more if you get into a poaching situation.” Paris texted back.

Her financial situation loomed over Rory’s head in the days leading up to their trip to New York. Sitting in the gazebo with Lorelai and Hayden, Rory started to lose it. “This is just so sobering,” she told her mother. “Why oh why is this happening?”

“I know honey, it sucks. But this is life, this is life with a kid. You will never feel like you have enough. You just have to plow through.”

“It’s just so daunting. I can’t stay here because Logan lives in New York, but I can barely afford to live in New York.”

“Can’t you move to a cheaper neighborhood?”

“I could, but it not in a neighborhood that would be safe or close enough to Logan.

“Does he have to stay in his neighborhood?”

“He works late nights as it is. Commuting would only add to that.”

“Well, you have a year to find a job.

“And then what?”

“And then what nothing. Focus on the here and now, not on what happens a year from now. If you don’t you will only make yourself crazy.”

“I just feel like I wasted so much time the last 10 years, chasing a journalism career that did not work out. There so much I could have been doing, now I have nothing.”

“Whoa! No Rory!! You have an education and experiences and contacts. Plus you have a kid who’s
father is financially well off and will do whatever he can to help. That is not "nothing". You have it so much better than the vast majority other women out there. Seriously, you need to get a grip and capitalize on what you do have.”

“I have that job with Mitchum. PR. He says I can do it.”

“Do you think you can? Do you think he means what he says?”

“Well, he was right about the journalism thing wasn’t he?”

“I don’t know. Why do I feel like you’re Belle and you are on the brink of giving up your freedom to save your father and live with the Beast?”

“Well, she was a martyr, but look how it turned out for her?”

“Stockholm syndrome?”

“Survival of her family. I mean it's not like I am selling my soul.”

“You haven’t even tried to look for anything else. Like you said, you have a year.”

“But if I can’t find anything then what? I lost an opportunity. Again, that would have been fine if I were on my own, but I have a child to think about. I can’t afford arrogance.”

‘You have time right?”

“About a month.”

“That may be enough time to get you a couple of leads. Don’t give up yet. You should at least try to find something else, that way if you do take this job, you can say that you tried.”

“Yes, I cannot give up without trying first.”

“And if you do take it, remember to be careful. This is a slippery slope. He is Hayden’s grandfather. Any conflicts can affect him too.”

Rory and Lorelai looked up to see Jess approaching them.

“Hi!” Rory greeted Jess with a hug.

“Well, this is a surprise,” Lorelai said.

“Well, I thought I would drop by, check in on you, meet the little guy,” Jess responded as he leans in to look at Hayden who is snuggled in Rory’s carrier.

“Oh, I think you’re in luck because he is waking up.”

Rory took Hayden out of the carrier. “Hayden, this is my friend Jess.”

“Hey there little man,” Jess greeted Hayden, “He’s great Rory. How are you doing?”

“Oh, you know, we’re adjusting. We’re good…we’re good.”

Jess saw that she seemed a bit concerned. He had to fight the urge to ask her to elaborate.

“Well, I’m glad. Hey Hayden, I got you something.”
Jess reached into his bag and pulled out the book *Knuffle Bunny Too*. This made Rory laugh.

“There’s a sequel?”

“It’s actually a trilogy.”

Jess sat down with Rory, Lorelai, and Hayden and proceeded to read the book to Hayden, with voices and all. His performance made Rory and Lorelai laugh hysterically. At the end of the book, Lorelai and Rory gave Jess a rousing round of applause before leaving the gazebo together to go to the diner.

In the distance, standing in front of Doose’s Market, the upset Logan watched the scene before he walks back to the apartment.

About two hours later and Rory and Hayden arrive at the apartment to find Logan packing up.

“Hey,” She said when she walked in, “there you are.”

“Here I am.”

“I thought you were going to join us at the diner for lunch.”

“Well, I just got caught in something here and lost track of time.”

“Oh, ok”

Rory took the sleepy Hayden out of his carrier and gently places him in his crib. She exhaled in relief, “Ok, two-hour stretch.”

“Two-hour stretch.”

“So what are you going to do? Do you need to go out? I can stay here…”

“I’m actually starting to pack up. We are going the day after tomorrow, so I want to make sure I’ve got everything.”

“Ok, well that is a good idea. There is so much stuff, I don’t even know where to begin.”

“I think just the basics, we can get the rest later once we are settled into our respective places.”

“Yes, that’s a good idea.”

Rory sensed Logan’s distance.

“Are you ok?”

“Yes, I’m fine.”

“You just seem preoccupied.”

“The gravity of our situation is weighing on me. We are going back to the real world now and I am not feeling too great about it.”

“Yes, I understand.”
“So how was your afternoon with your mom?”

“Oh good. We had a talk about transitioning to New York. She said that she could come down on
the weekends to help out until we get settled.”

“Great.”

“She and I also talked about my job prospects.”

“Really?”

“Yes, I am seriously considering that job with HG”

“Really, are you sure you want to sell your soul to the devil himself?”

“Well, it’s a sure thing.”

“True. No other prospects out there?”

“Well one, but it’s not an option.”

“What is it?”

“Naomi Shropshire called me. She was apologetic and wanting to work with me again. Apparently
there is another author who is going to write an unauthorized biography and she wants to beat her to
the punch.”

“Wow, talk about a gift from Heaven.”

“Yes, it is, but I am not taking it.”

“Why not?”

“That would mean me having to spend a significant time in London. And I can’t do that.”

“Why London?”

“Because she lives there?”

“She can’t come here for interviews?”

“This is a biography Logan, I have to follow her, you know that.”

“I mean yes, but she wants you to do this. I assume she knows you are a new mom.”

“Yes, she told me,” Rory imitated Naomi, “Dahling just bring the baby to London, we have the best
Nannies…”

“When did she make this offer? I don’t remember you talking to her.”

"It was before Hayden was born. The day you moved in.”

“Why didn’t you tell me before?”

“Because I knew I wouldn’t take it.”

“And why is that again?”
‘Well, because that would mean a major change in our living arrangement. It would be hard to do the joint custody thing separated by the Atlantic.’

“Well, if you told me about it, we could have perhaps arranged something.”

“Really? It's that easy?”

“Maybe, maybe not, but it would have been worth it to ask the question.”

“No Logan, it would have been hard.”

“You don’t know that! If you told me then maybe we could have worked out something.”

“You essentially just started again back here in the States and now you will go off to London? Seriously, think about it.”

“I don’t want you resenting me later for not taking this job because of me.”

“While you are certainly a factor, you are not the sole reason for not taking this job. Naomi is crazy and really I can’t take that right now. Plus, she is so unpredictable, I mean who knows what could happen? I could rearrange my life and find that she changed her mind once I got there. At this point, I cannot take a job that has so many unsure factors.”

“So what are you going to do then?”

“Like I said, I am seriously considering the job with HG”

“Really? I thought working for my father again wasn’t ideal.”

“Well, the reality of having to support a kid and pay a mortgage changes one’s concept of ideal.”

“It’s not what you dreamed of doing.”

“Dreams change.”

Logan went quiet. It was an uneasy quiet. Rory wanted to ask him what he was thinking, but he looked as though he wouldn’t tell her the truth. She lets the silence go on.

Finally Logan said, “You know, I think I will go running. I need to clear my head.”

“Ok,” Rory said.

Logan quickly changed and left the apartment.

Four o’clock rolled around with Hayden waking up. After his afternoon feeding, Lorelai came by and took the baby for an hour or so. During that time Rory continued to pack, looking out the window from time to time waiting for Logan to come home. Around 4:30 she received a text from him saying he was taking care of some things but would be home in time to put Hayden to bed. Logan arrived at 7:30 in time to get Hayden changed and dressed. Together they curled up on the couch and read Moonlight Over Manhattan before putting him down to sleep for the night. Logan continued to be tensely quiet. Rory didn’t know what to say, so she stayed silent. By 9, it was time for Logan to go to bed. Before he turned in he made a request, “I was thinking, “ Logan said, “Since we have to start getting used to the new schedule, maybe you can leave me alone overnight with the baby the second night we are in the City”
“Oh…ok” Rory said reluctantly.

“Ace, we have to make the break some time. Better to do it early. You can stay as late as you want and then come back early. We can put you up in a hotel nearby.”

“Yes, you’re right, but no. Let me see if I can stay with Paris and Doyle.”

Two days later, and it was time for Logan, Rory, and Hayden to leave for New York. Although it was only going to be for five days, Rory was in tears anyways. With the car packed and Hayden safely secured in the backseat, Rory and Logan said their goodbyes to Lorelai and Luke and headed out of town. The traffic was typical with a few construction delays. By the time they arrived in the city it was mid afternoon. Arriving at Logan’s building, Logan instructed Rory to take the baby in while he and the doorman took care of their possessions. Rory walked into Logan’s apartment surprised to find that it was already set up for Hayden. There was a crib in the corner of the bedroom, while stuffed animals covered the bed, and found a box full of baby care supplies on the kitchen counter. All they had to do was unpack the things they brought from Stars Hallow and Hayden would be all settled in. “How did this happen?” she asked Logan when he walked in the apartment.

“Had this taken care of yesterday. I figured it would be better to be ready.” Logan responded matter-a-factly.

Despite her efforts to get him to warm up, Logan continued to be polite but distant. Other than Hayden related conversations, they had very little to say to each other. Rory had given up on trying to figure out what was going on in Logan’s head. When he’s ready, she thought, he will talk.

The next day Logan took Hayden for the afternoon to visit his office and introduce him to his colleagues. Rory was not invited. So instead she called and made appointments with nanny agencies and searched for a decent apartment in the surrounding neighborhoods. She was able to locate some good prospects, all within a 30-minute walk to Logan’s neighborhood. That evening, after dinner and their usual good night ritual, It was time for Rory to leave.

“Ok, so I pumped enough milk and should last you for the night if there isn’t I took out some frozen packs and put them in the fridge.”

“Thanks, and don’t worry.”

“Easier said than done.”

Rory took one last look at her son then walked away. Logan walked her to the door.

“Call me if there is any trouble and I will be back right away,”

“I will.”

“Ok” Rory exited quickly so not to let Logan see her cry.

Later, dressed in her pajamas and eating chips and salsa, Rory settled in Paris and Doyle’s place. Doyle and the kids have long gone to bed, leaving Paris and Rory up for the night. Rory missed Hayden terribly and was glad that she had Paris to talk to. That night, Rory caught Paris up on the past month. They discussed the baby, how life was going so far and milestones to look out for in the
coming months. They talked about her job prospects and her possibly joining the Huntzberger Group. They also talked about Logan and his weird attitude the last two days.

“You know he’s in lo…”

“Stop! I know what you’re going to say.”

“You know I am right… You know what you need? Some wine.”

“I’m breastfeeding.”

“Not tonight! Pump and dump baby!”

Paris got out a bottle of wine and two glasses. Rory downed her first glass.”

“Oh, that felt good,” Rory exclaimed.

“Have you had a drink since you delivered?”

“Nope.”

“Well welcome back! So PR with the Huntzberger Group…”

“Yup.”

“Sounds like fun.”

“It could be. It’s the other side of journalism in lots of ways. The field is filled with former journalists.”

“I know, and you would be great at it. It’s just...The Huntzberger Group.”

“I know. It’s practical right? It’s the choice you make to benefit your family. Not my dream job, but who really is in their dream job? Lots of people are in it to keep things going. My mom for Pete’s sake worked as a maid. A PR job at a prestigious company is nothing to sneeze at.”

“And you’re sure about turning down Naomi?”

“Yes. It just won’t work. You know, two years ago being in this position job wise would have been the greatest thing ever. Now, it’s bereft with anxiety.”

“A baby changes everything.”

“You know what’s funny, there’s that pull to chuck it all and just stay home and take care of the baby. If you asked me about being a stay at home mom 10 years ago I would have said absolutely not. Now? I started crying just leaving him tonight. Must be the hormones.”

“Could you do that?”

“What? No, that would mean Logan would be taking care of everything. I can’t do that in good conscience.”

“What about letting him take care of most of the expenses baby wise and you freelancing?”

“That would be unfair time wise and financially.”

‘Not necessarily. If you stay home, take care of Hayden, I mean you calculated it yourself, you are
saving $45K minimum a year. That’s not small change. If you factor in also the cost of commuting, eating out, hiring help for other things that you would probably not have time for like housekeeping, grocery delivery, laundry, expenses add up. What’s the point of drawing a paycheck if 90% of it goes to paying someone to do tasks you could do yourself? I would run the numbers. As for time? Renegotiate the custody agreement. It’s not like you guys are fighting in that area.”

“I think that scenario would work out better if we were married.”

’True.”

“You sound like you’ve thought about this in great detail.”

“Oh yes. After the first one was born I seriously considered putting the career on hold and staying home. After all, I was raised by a nanny, and part of me didn’t want that.”

“So what changed your mind?”

“Getting real about who I am. Really, me? In Mommy and Me classes? Hanging out and arranging playdates? Making homemade baby food. Kudos to the woman who can do that, because for me I would kill everyone in a week. I’m not the stay home type.”

“True. Any guilt feelings?”

“Initially, I mean I thought there was something wrong with me, like I lacked some gene. But, my kids are in good hands, Clementina loves them, they love her, I love her. And Doyle is very good at doing his part. He is more of the Mommy and Me/Gymboree type, yes surprising huh?”

“Very. I don’t know. Women fought and are still fighting for a seat in the workplace. I feel like not working would be a setback.”

“No and yes. Women fought for a seat at the table, but they also fought for the right to choose their own path. A stay at home mom is no less a feminist that one who chooses to go to work that is IF she makes that decision freely. Before the chance to decide was not there, it was the woman stays at home and the man works. Could you imagine Doyle doing a corporate job and me staying home? That’s script for a murder-suicide right there. You know I would venture to say that the fact that Doyle can pursue his writing dream and take the kids to Gymboree is the result of the Women’s Movement. Dads everywhere should be thanking us.”

“Well, I should work.”

“And that is your choice.”

“And I’m lucky to have the choice.”

Rory pour another glass of wine, “You know on top of everything else, we have to find a nanny. Know of any good ones?”

“As a matter-of-fact, I do.”

“Really? Who?”

“Clementina.”

“Clementina is your nanny.”

“Not for long.”
“Why? Are you firing her? Then why would I want her?”

“We’re moving Rory.”

‘Moving? Where?’

“California. LA. Doyle and one of his writing partners pitched a TV series and it got picked up. He’s going to be a full-time TV writer. So, we’re packing up the truck and moving to Beverly.”

“And you’re ok with this?”

“Yes, well we have to make sacrifices for our families right? Anyway, it’s not like I am giving up anything anyway. What is really keeping me here? The business is doing well. I finally found a #2 person who is not a complete idiot and that I trust. Plus there are opportunities for me to expand out there. Apparently, there is a plastic surgery practice that is very popular among the A-lister set. They are in financial trouble because the trophy husband likes to shop. So we are looking into a merger. Have you baby delivered here, and then get a tummy tuck. What more can you want?”

“That’s great Paris. But…”

“But what?”

“Well, I’ll miss you. Here I am moving to the city and you are moving out.”

“You’ll do fine without me. Hey, you want to buy our house? We’re putting it on the market.”

“Thanks but I think at this point that will be a bit too much house for me. Really you’re selling, what if you want to come back?”

“Then we’ll buy another house. Just as long as we’re together, then we’ll be ok.”

“Well, listen to you all sentimental and optimistic! So when are you leaving?”

“It depends. We are still negotiating Doyle’s contract. Good thing we have Madeline on it or we would be screwed.”

“Ok, you have to get me up to speed on this. I didn’t have any time to talk to either one of them in depth at the shower. First of all, how did Madeline and Louise manage to crash my shower? Second, Madeline is an Agent? How in the hell did that happen?”

“When Madeline and I reconnected, I told her about you. She of course was floored and told Louise right away. They decided to crash your shower because they had to see it for themselves. I mean really Rory, you are the last person we expected to be in this situation. So I called Lorelai and asked if they could come. You’re not mad are you?”

“No, it was just a surprise. It was really great to reconnect with them. So what is Madeline’s story?”

“So she dropped out of college pretty much as soon as she started and drifted around for a year or two “finding herself.” She eventually became the trophy wife of some Hedge Fund founder. He was a nice guy, even genuinely loved her, but he worked a lot, could never relax, and ate horribly. Despite Madeline’s efforts, he would not commit to getting healthy. Unfortunately, all this led to his untimely demise, leaving Madeline a young and very rich widow. And well, the way she described it, widow life was not all it cracked up to be so on a whim, she started taking classes at the local community college. One class led to another and before she knew it, she had an Associates Degree in Psychology. She transferred to Wesleyan where she got a dual degree in Psych and Poly Sci.
From there she went on to Columbia Law School.”

“Yes Columbia!”

“Columbia! Yes and 4 years later she passed the New York and Connecticut Bar, first try.”

“Wow!”

“Turns out, she is one of the most successful negotiators and litigators of her class. This was based on the fact that her opponents always underestimate her. I mean you know Madeline, in person she is still sweet, accommodating, and slightly flaky, but once you get her into a courtroom or at a negotiating table, she will gut you.”

“Really!”

“Oh yea. One of her former colleagues told me once she did a pro bono case for this woman who lost her job because her kid was getting chemo. By the time Madeline was done, the employer not only gave the woman her job back, but a raise, back pay, and a public apology. She got into the whole entertainment law scene after she negotiated her cousin’s modeling contract. One thing led to another and before she knew it, she went to Hollywood. Madeline said she likes to represent off-air talent, not as much ego.”

“Amazing. What are you going to tell me that Louise is a corporate CEO?”

“Well, sort of. She has her own Chiropractic/ Eastern Medicine practice in LA as well. We are talking about doing some partnering if this deal of mine goes through. She does cupping for Gwyneth Paltrow when she is in town!”

“Oh, my head hurts…”

The next day Rory got up later than she expected. Drinking half a bottle of wine made for a restful sleep, but also extended her time away from her kid. After a quick shower and breakfast, Rory left Paris’s and Doyle’s house to meet Logan and Hayden. While waiting for her car, Rory received a text from Logan telling her to meet them at an apartment two block away from his current place. She arrived at the building, which was your typical vintage building to contemporary condo conversion. After being cleared from building security, she took the elevator up to the top floor and proceeded to the door opposite the elevators. As she approached the apartment, she heard excited talking and loud laughter. She opened the door to find Logan, Hayden, and a well-dressed, well-coiffed woman.

“Morning Ace” Logan greeted happily.

“Good morning.”

“Rory this is Sloan Phillips, an old family friend, and my realtor. Sloan, Rory Gilmore.”

“So nice to meet you,” Sloan said with an enthusiasm she found fake.

“So Sloan is the best realtor in the city. She can negotiate anyone to the wall. My family has been working with her for years.”

“My father and his go way back.” Sloan added, “He started this business, and I joined the firm after college. I usually don’t do these kinds of transaction anymore, but for Logan well…”

Rory noticed Sloan run her finger down Logan’s arms. She continued to notice how she laughed
just a little too heartily at Logan’s corny jokes and how she leaned in close to him. This woman is so annoying, Rory thought.

Hayden, sensing his mother was there, started to cry. Logan immediately took him out of the carrier and gave him to Rory. Together she and Hayden toured the apartment. It was a really nice place, about 1200 square feet, two bedrooms and two baths, open and filled with light. Rory pictured Hayden running around, spilling his toys all over, while Logan chased him around.

“Like it?” Logan asked, taking Hayden from Rory and showing him around saying to him “The new Huntzberger Hideout? The place where two guys can just hang out, play cards, drink beer, watch the game?”

“Yes, it’s really nice.” Rory observed.

“And the perfect price!” Sloan interjected. “I think we could even negotiate lower. It is among the last apartments and the developer really wants to move on.”

“Well it is tempting. I’m going to walk around again.” Logan said, giving the baby back to Rory.

“Go right ahead.” encouraged Sloan.

Logan left to tour the apartment again, leaving Rory and Sloan alone in the kitchen.

“So have you been with Logan for long?”

“Umm, yes we’ve known each other for a while.”

“Oh, really? Did you work together before?”

“Um, no actually…”

Hayden started to cry showing signs that he was hungry.

“I’m sorry the baby is hungry, I’m just going to sit over here…” Rory said heading towards the living room.

Rory sat down to breastfeed Hayden. Logan appeared about two minutes later.

“So you really like it?” Logan asked.

“Yes, The view is amazing. With a bit of baby proofing, I think it would be great.” Rory replied.

“I do too. Sloan, I’m going to take a look downstairs again.” Logan announced and then left the apartment.

Sloan, who was on a call when Logan left, walked over to Rory, who had finished feeding Hayden and now was walking around the living room trying to get him to burp.

“So, you’re Hayden’s mom!” Sloan asked a bit nervously.

“That I am.”

“Yes, you’re Rory, Rory”

“In the flesh.”
"You know Logan and I go way back."

"I know, you mentioned that."

"Hayden is just so cute. You’re just a scrumptious little tyke, aren’t you? Aren’t you?"

Ok lady, Rory thought, *don’t eat my kid…*

Just then Logan showed up.

'It looks good Sloan. I think this is at the top of the list.”

“Well, let me know your decision quickly. You know how fast things can move around this neighborhood,”

“I will. Rory you might want Sloan to help you find a place.”

“Oh I would LOVE to!” Sloan said, again with fake enthusiasm Rory notes.

“Oh I will definitely need some help” *but not from you,* Rory thinks.

"Well Logan,” Sloan said, "I have to get to that other appointment. Call me?"

"Oh yes, go, go. Thanks for fitting me in."

"Well,” she said in a very flirty way, "thanks for getting in touch."

*I’m going to barf,* Rory thought to herself.

"Nice to meet you Rory!” She said sunnily shaking Rory's hand.

"Like wise.” Rory said as Sloan exited the apartment.

"So I think this is it.” Logan told Rory.

"Yes, it’s nice, but are you sure you want her to do the negotiations?"

"She one of the best in the business, why not?"

"She seems flaky."

"She’s a shark."

"I guess I would want someone a little less Barbie and more business like. “ Rory observed, "I mean yes, get the apartment. If you have to go with her, then go ahead. Doesn’t bother me."

Carrying Hayden, Rory walked out the door towards the elevator.

Logan followed her, smiling.
As soon as Rory opened the door, she immediately covered Hayden's ears. The hammering, drilling, and other various constructions sounds were quite jarring. As she made her way through the work site, she noticed large panels of words being placed on the walls. “Those are my words,” Rory thought to herself. She passed by a group of workers who were busy testing a screen with footage of an interview with Mark Burnett. “I helped edit that interview.” Rory again thought to herself. It was then that she spotted her lunch dates, Moses and Helen. They saw Rory and quickly walked over, greeting her enthusiastically and fawning over the baby. Together they left the project site to go to lunch. “Wow”, Rory gushed as they walked to the restaurant down the block, “everything looks incredible.”

“It does, doesn't it?” replied Moses.

“It's really exciting to see it all come together.”

It was the first week of August, one month before the exhibit studying the intersection of politics and popular culture was to open. After all the work, the long and intense hours editing copy, seemingly endless meetings, and dealing with polite yet hostile interview subjects, it was all coming together. Seeing the what she was able to accomplish made Rory tear up a little.

They arrived at the restaurant and settled in. The conversation flowed from work, to kids, to family life and work again.

"So Rory, you're in New York to find a place to live? Are you going to start working soon?"

"Logan's leave ends soon, and he is looking for a bigger place. I have started too. I might stay with Paris for a while. I do have a job prospect, but I am looking at other prospects as well. If you know
of anyone who is hiring, please let me know."

Moses and Helen look at each other.

"What?" Rory asked.

Helen replied, "What a perfect segue! Sam? The person for whom you took over? He's done with his treatments. He's doing well, but has decided to retire."

"Really?"

"His last kid is set to graduate from college at the end of this school year. He was planning to work another five years, but after this scare, he and his wife decided it's time to retire and enjoy life." Moses continued.

"Wow, so where does that leave you?" Rory asked.

"Well" Moses explained, "Helen here has been promoted to Content Director."

"Helen! Congrats!" Rory said.

"Thanks!" Helen replied, "This position is all about client development and administrative stuff. Not as a creative, but then not as much arguing." She added with a wink.

Moses continued, "Malik, will be taking the Associate Director role, he will be overseeing the projects directly. Which leaves his current position, Project Lead, open."

"Really?" Rory asked cautiously.

"Rory?" Moses asked, "Would you like to be our new Project Lead?"

Rory smiled. Oh, what luck she thought to herself. "I don't have to think about it, yes, yes, I would love to join you."

Now that her employment question was answered, Rory turned her attention to housing. The news of the job sped up the urgency for Rory to find a place to live. She and Logan decided to extend their stay in New York until she found a place and by day three she found modest 2 bedroom, 1 bath apartment in a small building in the West Village. The owner, it turned out, was promoted and moved overseas, leaving a vacant apartment and a desperation to sell. With her significant downpayment and a pre-approved loan, Rory's offer was made and quickly accepted, with a closing date set two weeks away. By the time September rolled around, Rory was ready to move and start her life as a New Yorker.

After accepting the job with MN Designs and finding a place to live, Rory went back to Stars Hallow to start packing up for her move. It was no easy feat seeing that she was nomadic for so long. She had to retrieve boxes from storage, from her mom, and Paris and Lane's houses. Then there was the sorting. Stuff that she let go because it was time, clothes that no longer fit her postpartum body, books that she had not read in years (the hardest part.) Then there was Hayden's stuff. Because they were splitting between two households, Logan and Rory not only had to sort through and split his items, but also make lists of things that they both needed in their respective places.

By the second weekend of September Rory was ready to move. With Lorelai in tow, the two of them packed up what they could in the Lorelai's car and then followed the moving truck to Rory's
new place. By early afternoon, the movers had unloaded Rory's things, giving her and Lorelai the afternoon and night to unpack. Logan and Hayden dropped by about late-afternoon to see the progress. While the furniture was set up (thanks to the movers) unpacking boxes proved to be the bigger challenge than anticipated. Along with being overwhelmed, Rory was hungry and getting impatient. Seeing this Logan and Lorelai volunteered to go to the grocery store; they knew better than to stay around Rory when she was in this mental state.

Logan, Hayden, and Lorelai walked to the store two blocks away, where Logan and Hayden split up from Lorelai. He went to get groceries, while she grabbed dinner from the prepared food section. When she was done, Lorelai set out to find Logan. After a few minutes of wandering, she found him standing in the middle of the cereal aisle, talking to a woman. As Lorelai walked up to them she heard the woman say, “So Logan if you are free tonight, we are meeting at 8 pm. It should be fun!” The woman said.

“It does sound like fun. Unfortunately, this is my weekend with Hayden so I will have to pass.” Logan responded.

Logan noticed Lorelai standing next to them. He looked a bit panicked.

“Hi”, she said extending her hand to the woman, “I’m Lorelai.”

“Justine, nice to meet you.” She said shaking Lorelai's hand.

Logan added, “Justine here is a rising editor in the publishing/print division.”

“Oh, that great! Do you specialize in any area?” Lorelai asked.

“Young Adult Fiction,” Justine replied.

“Teenage angst, how fun!”

There was an uneasy silence.

Logan broke the silence. “Well, we better get going. See you at the office, Justine.”

“Yea, great to meet you.” She said to Lorelai, "See you at work Logan!”

Lorelai, Logan, and Hayden walk away.

While standing in line waiting to pay for their groceries, Logan started to explain, “Justine and I work together.”

“Yes, she said so,” Lorelai said a bit confused.

“She and some of her friends are meeting at an event tonight and asked if I wanted to join them.

“Oh, and you have Hayden. Damn kids really can cramp your style?” Lorelei said jokingly with a wink.

“Yes, it’s true,” Logan replied cautiously.

“Logan, you don’t have to explain anything to me. If you wanted to go out with her, that's your business. I mean, you’re a grown man, and I am not your mother.”

“It just I don’t want Rory thinking that I am trolling for women at the grocery store.”
“Even if you were, unless you were using Hayden to pick up girls or neglecting him while you went on your conquests, it’s not any of her business.”

Lorelai looked at Logan seriously, “Logan you are entitled to a life, right?”

The three returned with groceries and dinner. Afterward, Logan and Hayden left for the night while Lorelai and Rory continued unpacking. They worked into the night, finally taking a break at midnight.

“Ugh!” Lorelai exclaimed when she sat down for a break, “for two people you have a lot of stuff!”

“Huh, and I got rid of stuff too!”

“’You know, initially I wasn’t too excited about this place, but it’s grown on me. This is great Rory, I’m really happy for you kid.”

“Thanks. Here I am a career woman, with a kid, and my own apartment. I’m an adult.”

“That you are. So how far is Logan from here?”

“30-minute walk, 10-minute drive.”

“Not bad. So, what’s going on with you and Logan?”

“What do you mean?”

“Rory, the man is still very much into you. I am just wondering where you are feeling wise.”

“I’m not sure.”

“Seriously? After all this time you are still not sure? I mean if I didn’t know better I would think you were a couple. You have been playing house pretty convincingly for the last three months.”

“Yes, there has been a lot going on. I just started my job, I am moving in here. I, myself, am finally getting settled. I can’t think about anything else right now. I like the way things are now with us. God, I don’t need this pressure!”

“Hey, this is not pressure, ok? I am just wondering.”

“Why?”

“Today at the grocery store, Logan ran a colleague from work. The woman invited him out. He turned her down and was adamant about letting me know that. He looked and sounded guilty.”

“What did you say to him?”

“I told him who he talks to or goes out with is none of my business and that he was entitled to a life.”

“Oh. Well, that’s true.”

“I don’t know Rory. God’s honest truth? I feel sorry for the guy. I feel like you need to do something and do something soon; either reciprocate his feelings or let him go. This limbo thing is torturous for me to watch!! I can’t imagine how it is for him to live it.”
"What do you want me to do mom? I honestly can’t make a decision. Things are stable for me once in a long time. This is the problem with us, we are never on the same page. He wants to get married after college and I am not ready so we break-up. We meet up again years later, but he is engaged and I am a mess, so we have an affair. Now we have a baby together and he is ready and I am not again. It just seems we are never in sync when it comes to our relationship. And by the way, we had this discussion months ago, I told him that he should go and live his life not base that aspect of his life on me.”

“Ok then…”

“Ok, then what?”

“Ok then, you have everything under control. You are zen, you are the go in the flow. You accept that if he found someone else tomorrow, you would be ok with it?”

Rory was silent.

“Ah, I thought so.” said Lorelai, “Look, my intention is not to pressure you; I get needing to do things in your own time. But, I worry. I just don’t want you to wait so long that you lose him and regret it later. If you really feel that you don’t belong together, then let him go so he can find happiness. However, if you love this man, truly love him, then try to find a way. Life is short Rory. If you have an opportunity for love, true love, then you should take it and revel in it as much as you can. There’s nothing better than being with the person who is truly for you.”

It was a week before Halloween. By this time the unconventional family had settled into a comfortable rhythm. Hayden stayed with Rory Monday and Tuesday nights, and the with Logan Wednesday and Thursday nights, trading off weekends. Their nanny Clementina, the same one who took care of Paris and Doyle’s children, traveled with the baby between the two houses. At first, the new parents adhered to their agreement, staying away and giving space when it was not their time with their son, yet as time moved on and schedules were interrupted (a business trip or long night at work here, a special occasion there), the schedule became more relaxed and fluid. Before too long, Rory and Logan found themselves at each other places on days that were not theirs, dropping by for a quick lunch or a long and lazy dinner, and/or an afternoon walk. They always spent at least one weekend day together, going to the zoo, watching boats float by in Battery Park, or just running errands. Platonic sleepovers became so regular that both Logan and Rory started keeping a stash of clothes at each other’s apartments.

“What are you doing?” their family and friends would ask them individually in private. “You are functioning like a traditional family anyway, why don’t you make it official?” While Logan knew what was keeping them apart, Rory never could answer that question to anyone’s satisfaction, including her own. Sure she enjoyed their time together, sure she found it easier and comforting when Logan was around, but there was something that was keeping her feelings at bay.

It was during this week of October when the change happened. It started on a Monday evening. Logan was over at Rory’s place minding Hayden while she packed to go on her first business trip. She was leaving mid-morning the next day for a trip to Chicago to work on the re-imagination and renovation of the historic Navy Pier. She was a bundle of nerves not only about the trip but also about leaving Hayden. Yes, thanks for their custody agreement, Rory had gotten used to being separated from him, but not so long and so far away. It was while she was packing and going over her lists that she got the text. Upon checking her phone she immediately went into shock. “Holy Crap!” she heard herself and Logan exclaim at the same time. Rory ran out to the living room to see Logan staring at his phone in shock as well, apparently receiving the same message. There was no denying it was not true; on their phones were the identical image of Finn and Louise showing off her
We either have you two to thank or to blame. Time will tell. ;)

Prepare for a summer wedding in California! <3 L&F.

“The countdown to the apocalypses has begun!” Rory said in shock.

“Time to stock up on ammo and bottled water.” Logan countered.

They looked at each other and then dissolved into uncontrollable laughter, deep elated yet nervous laughter that left them both in tears.

“Oh, I can’t wait to hear Paris’ take on this,” Rory said once she got control of herself.

“Finn!! Of all people.”

“Oh come on, way deep down inside Finn is a hopeless romantic. Now Colin? That would be a sight.”

“He seemed pretty taken with your friend Madeline.”

“Oh, God…” Rory responded half laughing, half horrified. After catching her breath, Rory became a bit pensive.

“What are you thinking Ace?”

“They met four months ago. Four months and they are already engaged. That's awfully fast, don't you think?“

“There are people who are together for years, get married only to break up a year later. There are people who marry two weeks after meeting and end up happily married for 50 or so years. Love is a funny, funny thing. For some people, they just know right away.”

“Yes, but how do you know that it’s right?”

“You just know I guess.”

Rory looked at Logan quizzically.

“Why are you looking at me that way?” Logan asked

“How did you know with Odette?”

Logan was quiet for a moment gathering his thoughts.

“I felt that I would not find anyone better.”

“And yet you cheated on her with me, how did that happen?”

“You know after you turned me down all those years ago, I was devastated. Those years I spent in California I didn’t date at all, I couldn’t even look at another woman. All the energy I had I poured into work. It was that hard to get over you. The successes I had in California helped me get me head
together. By the time I moved back to London, I felt normal for the first time in a very very long
time. That was about three years Rory. While I did not go back to my old ways, I did make a
congranted effort to go out on dates. Odette was the first woman I connected with after you.”

‘What was so special about her?’

“She was, is different. She lived her own life, didn’t play the game that we were all groomed to play;
she went off and did her own thing. She was independent, knew her own mind, and didn’t need
anything from anyone. You and her have a lot in common come to think of it. It was that need to be
herself, to live on her own terms, that made her attractive. And well, it didn’t hurt that we got along, I
mean really got along. She was a kindred spirit in many ways. She knew what it was like to have to
balance the expectations of being from “that” family with wanting to be real and true to yourself.
You know, she probably got kick out of as many prep schools as I did? I can’t say that what I felt for
her wasn’t real. There were genuine feelings there, there was a genuine love. However, there was
always this twinge, this nagging feeling something was missing. I thought that it was because our
relationship set a really high bar and therefore the expectation was impossible to reach. Bottom line,
Odette and I got along and there were no compelling reasons for us to break up, and yes there was
pressure from our families but in the end, we both felt getting married was what we were meant to
do.”

"And then it wasn’t?"

“No, and then it got very, very, confusing.”

“And that happened when?”

“Hamburg.”

“Oh.”

“You told me last year that you never intended to start anything when we reconnected that day?
Well, neither did I. When we were saying goodbye to each other in front of your hotel, I was feeling
happy that after all we went through, we could be friends. And then you kissed me goodbye, and I
totally lost it. Really Rory, I was a wreck for a week. It was the first time I seriously questioned my
relationship with Odette.”

“So how did you reconcile that?”

“Cold feet? I mean isn’t that the standard answer? I thought I was just nervous about getting married.
I mean doesn’t everyone have doubts at one point or another? I had genuine feelings for her Rory, I
realize now that it was not in the way that would have made us totally happy, and that I was in a way
settling, but I loved her enough to go ahead with the “dynastic plan.”

“And then, I came to London on that assignment…”

“…And blew everything to bits. I would have left her for you, but you brought up the ‘Vegas’ thing,
which to me indicated that you were not interested in going the distance. I could have said “no”, I
should have said, ‘no”, but there was something inside of me that wouldn’t let me. I didn’t want to
hurt Odette, but I also didn’t want to lose you either. The ‘Vegas’ solution seemed logical at the time.
I thought we would go on, I would get you out of my system once and for all, and that would be
that. The lies you tell yourself.”

“Hamburg was a revelation to me as well,” Rory confessed

“Really?”
“Reconnecting in that cafe was surreal. I was so happy to see you. The way things ended between us, the lack of contact all those years, I thought you hated me. I felt so glad and so proud when you told me about your life and were genuinely elated when you told me that you were engaged; All I ever wanted was for you to be happy. But then the day ended. After you dropped me off, I went to my hotel room and cried, because I felt like I lost something. I almost didn’t call you when I went to London that first time, but I did and you know the rest.”

Rory was quiet for a minute. She reflected back to the person she was just two years ago. Thinking about the Rory two years ago was like reading a character in a book; someone whose traits she can identify with, but not her in totality. She certainly was not that person anymore.

Looking at Logan, Rory continued, “I think I brought up the whole Vegas thing for similar reasons; I didn’t want to interrupt your life, but still wanted you in mine. However, I also believe that it was my way of maintaining some semblance of control over my life. I was not in a good place then Logan, I was very lost. Being with you made me feel “found”? But then I didn’t want you to be the sole reason for me to “found”. So I made a compromise telling myself that it was ok, we could be together and yet I could maintain my autonomy. I mean, am I not the one who declared I was a “girlfriend girl?” Sometimes you get so desperate in trying to keep things the way you think it should be, that it becomes absolutely nothing you recognize.”

“And yet, here we are, together again. What now Rory?”

Rory looked at Logan. Yes Rory, she asked herself, what now?

“No?” Rory responded, “Now I have to pack for my trip.”

8:30 am the next morning and Rory was in a car on the way to the airport. Instead of staying the night, Logan went home after their rather intense conversation, leaving her physical and emotional her space to think. Their conversation was the last thing she thought of before falling asleep, the first things she thought of when she woke up, and was prominent in her mind throughout her journey to Chicago. Once and for all, she wanted to know, was she in love with him or not? Was this strong emotion but settling, as it was between Logan or Odette, or were they really meant to be?

Throughout the day, thoughts of Logan filled her brain so much that not even her meetings with the project clients were able to distract her. She thought about the first time she and Logan set eyes on each other, when he, Colin, and Finn insulted Marty at the coffee cart. The argument they had the first time they talked when he told her to call him "Master and Commander." His natural tendency towards arrogance, the bridesmaids, proposing to her at her graduation party and his other over-the-top gestures that border on impulsiveness. His inability to decide between her and Odette. The fact that he is working for the Huntzberger Group, how different they are in terms of background, experience, family. They were so different in so many ways.

However, she also thought about the Logan she sees every day; how he was at her side throughout her pregnancy; how he tries his best to be a hands-on parent; how he takes care of little things such as stocking up on her favorite coffee, cleaning up her kitchen, making sure she has a ride home when she works late at night. She remembered how he told her she was 'special' that first time he kissed her at her grandparent’s vow renewal, how he supported her when she took the semester off from school. She also remembered how he dropped everything to be with her when her grandfather had his heart attack during her senior year at Yale and also how he stayed up all night with her as she cried after he died. She thought about how he was the first person she called when something good or bad happened in her life. She thought about how he always goes out of his way to give her what she needed and wanted. She thought about his generous nature and heartfelt sincerity.
That evening, Rory was in her room trying unsuccessfully to review a document when her Facetime started ringing. Upon answering the call she found Hayden's face taking up the whole screen.

“Hi, Mommy!” Logan said, as he hid behind the baby and moved his arms in a wave, “I love you, miss you, mommy.”

“I love and miss you too! What did you do today?”

“Well, I drank tons of milk and went to music class with Clementina. And I also spent the day playing my friend Nathan’s Sheltie puppy at the park. I think I may be in love.”

“Oh dear. That’s a conversation we will reserve for another year…and how is your father holding up?”

Logan moved from behind Hayden, “I’m good. You are gone, I am full-time parenting, so therefore time for issues to explode at the office.”

“Is it bad?”

“Nothing that I can’t handle, it just annoying and time-consuming.

“Oh, sorry to hear that.”

So tell me about it, Mary Tyler Moore, what fascinating things did you do today??”

Rory proceeded to tell Logan about her day; The flight in, the traffic in comparison to New York, their counterparts in the Chicago, and the scope of work they have to accomplish.

Rory was in mid-sentence when Logan interrupted her, ‘Whoa Ace, it’s bedtime for our friend here, he seems to be fading fast.”

“Ok, I forgot we're an hour behind. Go ahead.”

“Ok” again, putting Hayden in front of him so Rory could see him fully onscreen again, “Good night mommy, see you tomorrow. I love you!”

“I love you too baby”, Rory said to her son.

“So you have a quiet, lazy evening planned?”

“Well, as quiet as staying up and reviewing documents can be. It’s nice, gives one time to think.”

“Well think I shall let you do…Goodnight Ace.”

“Goodnight Logan.”

The next day Rory managed to compartmentalize her thoughts about Logan enough to get through the work day. However, try as she might to distract herself, thoughts about Logan managed to invade her head in insidious ways. People running or biking along the lakefront reminded her of him. The skyscrapers of the Chicago skyline reminded her of taking Logan’s hand as they leaped off the scaffolding during that first Life and Death Brigade event. Watching a group of young people singing along to a song as they sat in traffic reminded her of her and Logan singing along to songs on the radio while soaking in the sites during the various road trips they took during their relationship.
It was when she returned to her hotel that she had her epiphany. Walking past the registration desk towards the elevators, she spotted Logan standing in front of the elevators with Hayden in his stroller. Excited that Logan came to surprise her, she walked quickly towards them, only to have her stop in her tracks when another woman walked up to the man and gave him a kiss. It wasn’t Logan, but someone who looked liked him from behind.

All at once Rory felt a rush of disappointment quickly followed by excitement. It was there all along, only now at this moment was she ready to accept it. She was in love with Logan and wanted to be with him.

Rory stepped into the elevator, pressed the “11” button and stood in the corner impatiently waiting while her fellow elevator mates got off on their respective floors. After seemingly forever, she finally reached her floor where she hurried to her room and set up her laptop in time to receive her Facetime call. Just as she signed in her computer started ringing with the icon on her screen soon giving way to the images of the smiling Hayden and Clementina, sitting in what Rory knew as Logan’s living room.

“Hi, Rory! Can you say hi to mommy Hayden?” Clementina greeted.

“Hey, what are you doing there?” Rory asked trying not to sound disappointed.

“Logan had an issue at work. He wasn’t sure what time he could come home so he asked me to stay. My sister is on her way with food, I think after Hayden goes to sleep we’re going to binge watch the last season of Supernatural.”

“That sounds like fun,” Rory said.

Rory and Clementina discussed Hayden’s day and the schedule for Friday. Rory then said good night to Hayden and then hung up. “Tomorrow,” Rory thought to herself, “tomorrow I will talk to him.”

Rory journeyed home on the 10 am flight the next morning. As she watched the approaching New York skyline through the airplane window, she contemplated how she would tell Logan about her new perspective. She questioned whether or not he would be willing to give them another chance. The thought of rejection made Rory feel both emotionally and physically sick, but she had to say something. For the first time in a long time, she knew where she stood in her relationship with Logan and she wanted to be honest about it.

The opportunity came much quicker than she anticipated. Rory arrived at home to find not the nanny, but Logan pacing around her apartment with Hayden trying to get him to settled for his afternoon nap. Upon seeing her Logan put his fingers to his lips and mouthed the question, “is he asleep?” Seeing her nod her head yes, Logan let out a relieved sigh and proceed to Hayden’s bedroom where he gingerly put him down in his crib. “Oh thank God.” Logan vented to Rory as he closed the door to Hayden’s room. “We forgot to pack his sleep blanket. I didn’t realize it until after Clementina left. I’ve been trying to get him to sleep for about an hour!”

“Where is Clementina anyway?”

“My afternoon meetings were canceled so I decided to blow off work. I let Clementina leave early. She’s been pulling longer duty this week, and I wanted to give her a break.”

“That’s very nice of you.”

“Yes, that is until I realized that we forgot the blanket. I don’t know who cried more, Hayden or
me.” Logan said with a self-deprecating smile.

Rory laughed, “Well I am glad you survived.”

“So welcome back! How was the rest of your trip?”

“Great! Last night after my Facetime call with Hayden, the team and I met in the hotel bar and were able to hammer out a formal timeline which the Pier people approved it this morning, so we are good to go.”

“It’s amazing how productive people can be after a few martinis!”

“I know right? I’m probably going to have to make a couple more extended trips to Chicago in the upcoming months. I don’t know how we are going to handle that with the baby…”

Logan shook his head assuredly, “Don’t worry that won’t be an issue. I can take him more days, or you could even take him with you. I don’t think Clementina would mind a working vacation in Chicago. And of you are there for an extended period of time, I could always fly out. We’ll make it work Ace.”

“Thanks, that’s good to know.” Rory, realizing that she was smiling and staring at Logan for a bit too long, turned away blushing. “So, have you eaten lunch? I think I have a can of soup in the cupboard.”

“No, I think I better take off and let you get settled. Plus I need run home and get that blanket or you’re in for a rough night.”

“No hurry. Hayden and I can walk over to your place when he wakes up. Or do you have plans for dinner? We can meet up half way.”

“Sure, at the usual place? 5:30?”

“It’s a date.”

“Great!” Logan placed his hand on Rory’s arm and leaned in to give her their customary hello/goodbye kiss on the cheek. But, as Logan withdrew his face from hers, he sensed her head turn and then the sensation of her lips sweeping against his face. He straightened to find Rory looking at him with a hopeful expression. The next thing they knew they were kissing. A long, soft, and very meaningful kiss. “Ace,” Logan said softly when he came up for air, “What are you thinking? Please just don’t let this be just a fleeting moment, my heart can’t take that.”

“I was just answering that question you posed before I left.”

“What question is that?”

“What now?”

“And?”

“I would say that we should move forward, together.”

“Together?” Logan asked excitedly.

Rory kissed Logan again, “Together.”
An hour or so later, Logan and Rory were in bed cuddled under a blanket. Rory recounted to Logan her epiphany while in Chicago. The story made Logan laugh. “Ace! If I had known that sending you off to Chicago would restart our relationship, I would have packed you off months ago.”

“I’m just glad that you were patient and was still interested.”

“How could I not be interested in you? I do confess there was a point where I almost, just almost gave up.”

“You did? When?”

“Just before we left Star Hallow for here the first time. I saw you and Jess at the gazebo. You two just seemed to so together; I thought we were not going to happen.

“What brought you back?”

“Sloan”

“The real estate agent?”

“Yes. When I saw that you were ready to go 12 rounds with her after her shameless flirting, I had hope.”

“And all this time I thought you were oblivious.”

“It was hard not to miss. Subtlety was not her strong suit.”

“I was pretty ticked off, especially the part here she was like “Oh, Hayden, he’s so adorable” after she found out I was not an employee, but the mother.”

Logan laughed again, “Seeing you resisting the urge rip her head off was the best part of that afternoon.”

“Well, at least I was entertaining.”

“Indeed you were. It was also that day that I was able to relax somewhat about us.”

“What? You thought that I was a ‘done deal’?”

“No and yes. I knew that your reaction meant that we still had a fighting chance. I admit, after that visceral display, I was so tempted to do some sort of over-the-top gesture to show you how I felt and possibly get you back on my side. But then I remembered that argument we got into the day that my parents ambushed Lorelai and Emily, and I decided to hold back.

“And your fiendish plan worked.”

“It was nerve-wracking, but well, we are here right?”

“So, where do we go from here?”

Before Logan could answer, Hayden started to cry.

“I’ll get him,” Logan said.

The two got up and quickly dressed. Logan left the room and returned a minute later with the newly awakened Hayden, who laughed excitedly at the site of his long-absent mother.
“Hi there buddy” Rory happily greeted as Logan handed him to her.

Logan and Rory then spent the rest of the afternoon in bed cuddling and playing with their baby.

It’s later that afternoon/early evening and Rory was waiting for Logan and Hayden on the benches of the Vesuvio Playground. Logan and Hayden left her place about two hours earlier to let her get settled in, unpack, and shower, while they went to Logan's to retrieve the sleep blanket. She looked over to see Logan and Hayden approaching. To the outside world, the three of them looked like a typical New York family enjoying a warm fall evening, but to Rory the change was palpable. She felt freer and lighter than she has in a long time. She felt safe and secure. She felt for the first time in her life she was finally home.

“You know, we never got that conversation started,” Logan said as he pushed Hayden on the swing.

“What conversation was that?”

“Where do we go from here?”

“Oh yes. You have any thoughts on that?”

“Why, yes I do, here.” Logan took out a small object from his pocket and put it in Rory’s hand.

Rory looked to find a small blue box which contained vintage engagement ring. In that moment Rory remembered the words her mother spoke to her several weeks ago. “If you have an opportunity for love, true love, then you should take it and revel in it as much as you can…”

She looked at Logan with a wide smile, yes she thought, yes I want to marry this man. “Fine,” she replied.

“Fine?!? Really? Fine?!? Well, ok then,” Logan returned with an equally wide smile.

He took back the box, removed the ring, and placed it on her finger. He then grabbed Rory, lifting and swinging her around in the happiest hug he had ever given.

Upon seeing his parents engaged in such an emotional embrace, Hayden started to cry as if he was feeling left out. “Oh no don’t cry, “ Rory pleaded, picking up her son. Logan then embraced and kissed the two of them, quietly celebrating the moment. Finally on track, he thought. Finally we are together. “I love you Ace,” Logan said to Rory.

“I love you too.”
Chapter Summary

The LAST Chapter. Yes, Rory and Logan (along with others) get their happy ending. This is how it unfolds.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Ready

Later that night back at Logan's place, Rory was looking at her engagement ring while brushing her teeth when she realized something. “Umm, Logan,“ she asked as she got into bed, “we were only separated for about two hours this afternoon. You mean to tell me that you bought an engagement ring within that period of time with Hayden in tow?”

“Well, no,” replied Logan sheepishly, “I’ve had it for a while.”

“How long?”

“I bought it the day after we saw each other in Philadelphia. You know after we made the date to meet-up?”

"You're kidding? A little over confident there Mr. Huntzberger?"

"No, I bought it just in case. Believe me, I played many scenarios in my head on how that date was going to end. The ring was me being optimistic? Of course, you telling me that you were pregnant didn't even enter my mind."

“Wow. I really ruined that day for you. You and me and proposals…geez”

“Well, I held on to it because I had hope. Third time's a charm I guess.” He replied with a smile.

“I guess it is.”

“You know I almost didn’t bring the ring with me? Hayden and I had a pretty serious debate about it.”

“Really now?”

“Yes, after much back and forth he told me to just do it. It was time.”

“That’s one insightful kid.”

“Yes he is! So how are we going about this? Want to go for the big over-the-top wedding? My mom would love it!” Logan said with the twinge of sarcasm.

“No!”
“We can go to the city registry next week or fly to Vegas tomorrow. Have that Elvis wedding of your dreams. We can just get it done, no fuss.”

“Elope? As romantic as it sounds, I don’t think I want to do that either. I can’t get married without my mom, grandma, and the rest of the family. And Lane…and even Paris.”

“Paris?”

“I know, knock me over with a feather.”

“Well, we can have a small ceremony, but we’re going to have to fight for it. It got really ugly the last time…”

“When you were planning with Odette.”

“Yea…”

“We can avoid that.”

The next morning Rory, Logan, and Hayden took off for Stars Hallow. They broke the news to Lorelai and Luke in the middle of the Saturday afternoon lunch rush, who met the news with overwhelming joy and relief (Luke was so happy that he gave out free dessert and coffee to everyone for the rest of the day.) A call was made to Emily, who immediately made plans with Rory to go through their clothing storage in search of Emily’s wedding gown.

“Grandma that’s generous of you, but it won’t it be a bit too formal for what we are planning?” Rory warned.

“Oh, you can take it and see if the dressmaker can modify it to your taste. It’s would be such a shame if it was not used again.” Emily reassured.

Next, they cornered Taylor, who Logan charmed into opening up the Star Hallow event calendar so they could secure a group of possible dates. After a quick visit with Christopher, Honor and Josh, and Logan’s parents, as well as phone calls to Emily, Francine, April, Lane, Paris, Colin, and Finn, a date was picked, November 25, 2017, conveniently the Saturday after Thanksgiving.

“Logan that is so soon,” Shira lamented to Logan in private after being informed of the date, “are you sure this is what you want?”

“Well no mom, this is what Rory wants. If it were up to me we would have gotten married today in Vegas. Be happy that you were invited.”

With that Shira dropped the subject.

The wedding planning began in earnest. They had barely a month to go and much to do. Sookie took on the task of catering without begin asked while Lorelai, with Kirk as her assistant, took charge of the décor and reception arrangements. They decided on a wedding in the town square under a tent that could be heated in case of cold weather. Because it was important to his parents, Logan and Rory agreed to have the Huntzberger family minister officiate the wedding along with Reverand Skinner, while Lane and Zach were asked to provide the music. During the next month, Rory visited the dressmaker almost every week to check on the design and fit of Emily's refashioned
wedding dress. Finally and with constant reminding from Mitchum and Emily, Logan and Rory also had a couple of meetings with their respective lawyers to iron out their prenup. Before they knew it Thanksgiving weekend arrived. Rory, Logan, and Hayden spent the holiday itself with the Huntzberger side. Other than one slightly snide comment about the wedding from Shira, Rory enjoyed herself. *This is my new family...* she thought to herself at one point during the day...*they’re different but mine.*

The next day Rory went to Stars Hallow, leaving Logan and Hayden to hang out with his family while Rory checked on the wedding preparations. Remembering the chaos she witnessed and participated in when her friends got married, she was confirmed in her choice to keep the wedding small and simple. “Everything is under control,” Lorelai told her upon her arrival. Thanks to Lorelai’s experience, planning, and network of help, the wedding was in fact under control. However, despite her mother’s assurances, Rory had her checklist anyway and proceeded to go over every detail. The weather forecast called for cool but clear making the outdoor ceremony they desired possible. The tents and other items for their late lunch reception in the square were delivered with Kirk supervising the setup. Sookie was cooking up a storm and ahead of schedule, while the wedding desserts from Weston’s were all set. Lorelei and Rory finished the preparations in the apartment above the diner, making bouquets, boutonnieres, and other flower arrangements.

After about two hours of working on the flowers, Lorelai and Rory took a break. As Lorelai left the apartment to get a coffee, Jess walked in.

“Hi!” Rory greeted Jess.

“Hey yourself. I'm glad I caught you before I left.” Jess responded.

“Me too. How was Thanksgiving?”

“Luke out did himself as usual. And it wasn't too uncomfortable having you grandma mixed in with our side of the family”

“You sat her, and Liz and TJ at opposite ends of the table?”

“That, and several bottles of scotch did the trick.”

“Good thinking.”

“Thanks. So...Saturday”

“Yep, Saturday.”

“You're going to be an old married lady.”

“I am pretty much there already, just need to make it legal.”

“Yea, I hear you.”

Rory saw that Jess had a pensive look on his face, “What?” she asked.

“You sure this is what you want?” Jess responded.

“Yes, I have never been more sure of anything.”

“Well then, I'm happy for you.”

“I'm sad you can't make it.”
“Well, with Logan and me not seeing eye to eye, I wouldn't want to make anyone feel uncomfortable, especially on your wedding day. However, as my present to you, in the future I will try to make an effort. We are family after all.”

“Thanks Jess, that means a lot. So…Detroit?”

“Yep, De-Troit.”

“She’s from there?”

“Yes, I'm going to meet the family which is weird because we've been friends for a long time and I have already met them all. This is sort of a reintroduction as we are more than friends now.”

“Well, I'm glad for you and Penny.”

“Yes, it amazing how someone can be right in front of you the whole time, yet you never see.”

“Sometimes you have to be ready to see it.”

“True. Anyway, she is starting a Jazz residency with the dance department at NYU next semester. It culminates with pieces in the Spring show. I'll let you know, maybe we can all get together when it opens.”

“That would be great.”

“Oh, most important,” Jess dug into his bag and handed her her manuscript.

“Finished it last night. My notes are in the margins. Not too many, a couple of spelling and punctuation errors, split infinitives, dangling participles. You know, the usual.”

“And?”

“It’s really good Rory. You are one helluva writer. And I am not saying that because I am in the story. Thanks for not being too hard on me, by the way.”

“Thanks for giving me the idea.”

“Are you sure you want to go that direction with the book? Really? Because I can help you out.”

“Thank you, but no. I know what I want to do with the book.”

The wedding day finally arrived. Rory, looking out the window of the diner, watched as relatives and friends started gathering in the square. She saw Logan, looking rather sharp in his freshly pressed blue suit, carrying Hayden while walking around and greeting their guests. “Kid” Rory heard Lorelai say, “Nervous?”

“No, not really. Just excited. Mom, everything looks so beautiful! Thanks.”

“Don’t thank me, thank Kirk. I gave him the idea and he went with it. I tell you, wedding coordinator may be his calling.”

“I am glad we had a nice day.”

“Luck has been running on your side lately. Enjoy it.”
Rory got up and walked around the diner.

“Just how much money do you think we’ve spent eating here?”

“Oh, I don’t want to know. Perhaps enough to buy a small Caribbean island and then some.”

“I think we would have saved so much money if we learned how to cook.”

“Yes, but think of all the fun we would have missed just staying home? Our lives were made all the richer because we didn’t cook.”

Rory picked up a mug and let out a small laugh.

“What are you thinking?” Lorelai asked.

“Do you remember my first meal here?”

“Yes, it was the third day after we moved into the house.”

“You were trying so hard to be domesticated, insisting on cooking breakfast for me every morning.”

“And after I nearly burned down the house the third time, we gave up and came here.”

“I remember, Luke refused to give me coffee.”

“Well, you were only 10.”

“Yes, he gave me hot chocolate instead, so I drank your coffee.”

“How long was it before he gave up?”

“About two weeks. I think your diatribes on coffee and our shared DNA wore him down.”

“You’ve come a long way since then kid.”

“So have you!”

“Yes, life is good. It took a weird turn, but life is good.”

“Sometimes those turns is just what we need to find our true destination. Life full circle.”

“Wow, well aren’t you just Ms. Profound today.”

“I can’t help it, it’s my wedding day!”

“Oh honey, I am so happy for you. He’s not 1/2 bad that Logan guy.”

“Yes, and he makes cute babies too!”

“The cutest!”

“Mom, you think things are going to change now that I am getting married?”

“In what way?”

“I don’t know, it seems like such a momentous occasion. One would think there would be a great change.”
“No, I think things will evolve as they will. Good, bad, easy, difficult, no matter where you are or what you’re doing I’ve got your back kid. Always.”

“Thanks mom, I have yours too.”

Rory’s phone dinged, indicating a text from Lane.

“Lane says they’re ready for us.” Rory informed Lorelai.

Lorelei turned to her daughter, brimming with pride.

“Are you ready?” Lorelai asked.

“As ready as I’ll ever be.”

A few minutes later, wearing a dress fashioned from Emily wedding dress, Francine’s jewelry, and carrying a bouquet wrapped with one of Richard’s bowties, Rory walked down the aisle holding her mother’s hand. Waiting for her at the other end at the foot of the gazebo was the smiling Logan, surrounded by their families. It was a relaxed ceremony. Lane and Zach provided simple yet beautiful music. The ministers who officiated the ceremony spoke of the nature of love and marriage, weaving in stories of their interactions with Rory and Logan throughout the years. Honor read a poem about love and family, with Logan and Rory reciting their own carefully crafted vows. Twenty minutes later, with the exchange of rings and a kiss, Rory and Logan were married. In a shower of flower petals and applause, the newly married couple walked down the aisle where they kissed again. They then proceeded to the reception tent where everyone dined, danced, and partied the afternoon away.

With the early sunset and the onset of the late fall chill, the party began to break up early-evening. In saying their goodbyes to their guests Rory became very emotional. Looking around the room she felt lucky that all the important people in her life were able to share this special day. She made sure to hug each and everyone one of them, thanking them for their love and support throughout the years. Rory became especially emotional when she said goodbye to Paris and Lane. Hugging them both at the same time, she asked, “Do you remember where I was last year at this time?”

“Oh yea.” Lane responded.

“You were a complete and utter mess.” Paris deadpanned.

“Well, thanks in part to you guys, I am here today. I don’t know what I would’ve done without you two.”

“Of course. I never had any doubt that you would pull through. You’re Rory Gilmore after all.” Lane said.

“You faced your challenges and won, because that’s what you do.” Paris added.

“We’ll always be there for you Rory,” Lane said.

She hugged them again and started walking to the other side of the tent to join Logan and Hayden. As she made her way, she thought about how she changed, especially this past year. She thought about the girl who was always careful and planned everything. She thought about how that girl reacted when things did not go her way. She thought about where she was last year; how she had hit rock bottom after years of disappointments and questionable choices. She thought about how she was able to work her way out of that hole; the lucky breaks, the family and friends who encouraged her, and the strength that she found within herself to move forward and reinvent herself. She
thought about her son, her new found family life, and how the strife she endured made her a better daughter, granddaughter, sister, mother, wife, friend, and most importantly, a better person. Finally reaching her husband and son, she gave Hayden a hug and kiss goodbye before taking Logan’s hand so to leave to spend their first night together as husband and wife.

“Ready?” Logan asked, kissing her hand.

"Ready." she answered.

Rory was ready. The good, the bad, the happy, the sad, Rory was ready; ready for anything and everything.

Chapter End Notes

This work has been quite a journey. I wrote this in the midst of dealing with some serious family medical issues. Writing this was my escape/way of coping. Thank you all for reading and for your encouraging words and constructive comments; it helped me get through some dark times.

As always I welcome your comments and enjoy!
It was New Years Eve in Stars Hallow. Rory and Lorelai were walking from Lorelai’s house towards the town square. Being that their family had grown and was spread out, the 2017 Gilmore-Danes holiday celebration took place after Christmas, starting on the 29th of December. Luke and Lorelai spent the week before Christmas and Christmas day in Nantucket with Emily and then the three of them came back to Stars Hallow to have a family celebration with Rory, Logan, Hayden, April, and Selah. It was a full house, full of fun and laughter. Yet, while wonderful and festive, it gave Lorelai and Rory little one-on-one time. This walk to Westons for New Years Eve desserts gave the mother and daughter some alone time.

After picking up the desserts and with travel mugs in hand, Lorelai and Rory sat on the gazebo steps, finally able to catch up.

“So how is married life treating you kid?”

“It’s going well. One month in and going strong.”

“Ah, still in the “polite” phase. Just wait until he doesn’t change the toilet paper roll for the 100th time, then it will all come to light.” Lorelei joked.

“Mom, we’ve lived together before, I think we’ll be ok.”

“Eh, you never know. Ok, so now that you are married, can we now do married lady things?”

“Like what?”

“I don’t know, what do married ladies do?”

“Same thing single ladies do, but with guaranteed dates?”

“Hmm…ok.” Lorelai responded with a bit of mock disappointment.

“Mom, I have something for you.” Rory reached into her bag and pulled out a hardbound book. On the jacket read two words: Gilmore Girls.

“Kid, the book is published?” Lorelai asked with amazement.

“Well, sort of. The book is self-published, I was able to get it bound. I have about 25 copies. This one is yours.”
Lorelai opened the book to read the dedication, “To the vivacious woman who gave me my name and life’s blood. With great love and gratitude, I dedicate this work to you.”

Lorelei started to tear up, “Oh honey, this is beautiful.”

“Well let’s hope you feel that way after you read it.”

“So, I don’t understand, you self-published?”

“After I finished the book, I realized I didn’t want to shop it around. I needed to write this book, but I needed to write it for me. There was so much that I realized and discovered about myself through this process. It really got me through the tough times. But, you were right mom, it is our story. Not for public consumption. So I published it, for us. For our family. So that we can remember and well, when Hayden can learn about us when he is older.”

‘Are you sure you want him to know so much about you?’

“Sure why not?”

”Thank you Rory, this is the best gift. I can’t wait to read it.”

“Well there would be no story without you. Thank you Mom, thank you for giving me this story.”

“Your welcome.”

“Happy new year Mom.” Rory said hugging her mom

“Happy New Year Kid.” Lorelei said back.

And with that, it began to snow.

Chapter End Notes

I remember how upset I was at the end of the revival. I wanted everything to be neat and wrapped up. I understand now that ASP wrote that to keep the story going. However, I think the Gilmore Girls story can continue, even with this ending. Hope you enjoyed it.

Thank you all for reading. This was great fun! :)

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