

Iris

“I can see where all of your problems stem from, Nat.”

Iris was explaining her discoveries to her latest patient. In her eyes, Nat was more than the nervous, reserved kid he believed to be. Her psychoanalysis skills would help him for the better, and she knew that for a fact.

“You and your parents don’t have the best relationship.” Iris continued. “They push their problems onto you even though they were nice to you in the past. This clash between treatments creates a source of confusion and conflict. You *want* to do things, but you’re constantly *scared* about what will happen. This is the origin of your nervousness.”

After Iris’ explanation, all Nat did was give a small nod. Iris knew it was natural for him to respond like that - She’s seen her fair share of anxious people in her office. Making a small yet friendly grin at Nat, Iris concluded her meeting with him.

“Nat, I know it sounds frightening to face your issues. That’s why I’m by your side. I’m here whenever you need me, no matter what your mind tries to tell you.

Another successful day. Iris thought as she walked to her car. *Another day of psychoanalyzing people.* She was just about to take out her car keys when she felt her phone rumble. Taking that out instead of the keys, she noticed who was calling her.

“Mom.” Iris muttered to herself. She never had a good mother-daughter relationship with her mom. She would constantly breach Iris’ privacy and tell her what to do. Unfortunately, her

mom's place was the same place she was staying for her psychoanalysis work. She would be able to return to her own home eventually, but for now, she needed to tolerate her mom.

Declining the call, Iris put her phone back in her pants pocket, exchanging it for her car keys. *I'll talk to her when I get home.* She thought to herself. *I can't just call her and drive at the same time.*

By the time Iris arrived at her mom's place, she was on the verge of collapsing. Her mother continued to try and call her through every bit of the drive. Iris, of course, attempted to ignore the vibrating block in her pocket, but she could only tolerate it for so long. Eventually, she felt annoyed about her helicopter mom, but she couldn't just take her eyes off the road. In the end, Iris continued to drive, even if she felt like punching a wall.

After parking the car in the garage, Iris took out the pair of house keys she had and made her way to the front door. All it would take to get to her own room was the turn of a lock and a walk through the living room. That was all it would take.

The moment Iris opened the entrance, she was welcomed by an all too familiar sight: With her hands on her sides and a face tinged with irritation, Iris' mom was obviously angry.

"Why haven't you been answering my calls?" She blurted out. She didn't care about whether or not the front door was closed yet. Her daughter needed a lesson in listening to her parent. "I tried calling you eleven times, Iris. Eleven!"

"I was driving." Iris replied in an emotionless tone. She didn't want to tick her mother more than she already was. "I wasn't able to use my phone, and I didn't want to distract myself."

“So? Last time I checked, you’re able to *call* on drives, not *text*.” Her mother’s voice suddenly became as sharp as a knife. “You could’ve just put me on speaker or something, you know. You should’ve answered me!”

Iris didn’t even bother to reply back. Her mother was leading her into an argument she didn’t want to enter. Ignoring the various comments her mom was giving to her, Iris silently made her way into the guest room. It took some of her willpower *not* to rebuke back, but she needed to keep her cool. After all, agreeing to fight the beast would only make it even more furious.

Once Iris was sure she locked herself in the guest room, she heaved out a large sigh. *She really doesn’t need to interrogate me like that.* Iris thought to herself. *Doesn’t she understand I’m an adult? I’m a full grown woman who knows what to decide for herself... And right now, I’m deciding to change out of these clothes.*

She waltzed across the small room over to its just-as-small closet. Its door was white like the rest of the walls, but its light blue frame outlined its location. Turning the knob, Iris opened the door and examined what she had for herself. All of her shirts and pants were awaiting her on hangers. She shifted through them, searching for an outfit to wear.

“Let me see what I have here...” Iris said to herself. She turned a light blue t-shirt toward her gaze. “Something light? ...Nah.” She pushed the shirt’s hanger aside and took out a black t-shirt. “Something dark?” She took a moment to ponder about it, then decided to place the shirt back.

After searching through the closet for a full five minutes or so, Iris came to an unfortunate conclusion: “Are these really all the clothes I have?” She glazed over her selection one last time, full of disbelief. “Is my fashion sense really this limited? Looks like I need to get myself a new wardrobe or something...”

Suddenly, a light bulb lit up over Iris’ head. *I could get myself a new wardrobe...* She was stringing a plan together the more she thought about it. *I have the money, and I could buy whatever clothes I wanted. I don’t need to listen to Mom’s rule about “only wearing bland colors.” I am my own person, and I can be as wild and free as I want.*

Over the next few days, Iris spent her expenses building a fresh wardrobe for herself. To her delight, the local shops provided exactly what she wanted. On one day, she wore a bright orange t-shirt with a delicate flower motif. The next, she had an elegant purple dress, fit with a lilac skirt. Today, Iris was clad in a blue polo shirt as dark as a deep ocean abyss. She felt accomplished to break free from her mother’s mold and be herself for once.

Iris had just gotten back home from her latest psychoanalysis session; A boy named Zeke with anger issues, but accompanied with a father who seemed awfully calm about everything. A simple yet complex case, as always.

Popping out her car, Iris locked it and made her way to the front door. She was finding the house key in her new gray pants when it opened by itself - Only, it wasn’t by itself. Iris’ mother was waiting on the other side, her arms crossed and her expression looking as infuriated as a battle-ready lion.

“Welcome back, Iris.” she spoke. “Please, come in.”

Iris automatically knew something was wrong. Her mom's blunt tone told her so. She could tell her mother was definitely angry, and with an angry Mom around, Iris knew she was a ticking time bomb, ready to explode at any moment. Nonetheless, she had to face whatever wrath was awaiting her, no matter the consequences.

She walked through the front door and entered the house. As she was closing it behind her, her mom's voice appeared again, full of annoyance.

"Iris, would you mind telling your mother about those clothes in your closet?" Iris' mom tapped her foot and sharpened her voice. "I noticed every single one of them when I vacuumed the room. Care to explain why they're *not* dull colors?"

Here it is. Iris realized. She had never told her mother about her updated wardrobe. If she did, she predicted she would just dump it all out. Iris was lucky to still have her new clothes by the time she returned home, but she had an explanation to give.

"I wanted to mix it up a little. I wanted to wear other colors, so I decided to make myself a-"

"A new wardrobe?" Iris' mom cut off her daughter's sentence. She placed a hand on her forehead, showing her disappointment and contempt. "Iris, do you have any idea what you're going to yourself? Do you have any idea what society will do to you for sticking out?"

"I wanted to try something different."

"Being different doesn't work out the way you want it to. Haven't you heard about all of those thieves and kidnappers out there? If you're not careful, you could be one of their victims!"

“Mom, I am a grown woman working as a psychoanalyst.” Iris could feel her irritation growing within her, but she concealed it. She didn’t want her rage to escape - At least, not yet. “I am fully capable of defending myself. I don’t need *you* to tell *me* how to take care of *myself*.”

“Iris Victoria Wilfred Wood, listen to your mother when she is speaking to you!” Iris’ mom screamed. Her daughter *needed* to listen to her, whether she liked it or not. “I’ve been in this world longer than you have. I’ve been through everything compared to what you’ve seen. As your mother, I *order* you to-”

That was Iris’ breaking point. With one swift strike, she effectively slapped her mother. She didn’t care about the horrified look in her eyes. Iris knew parents should *never* order their children, no matter what.

“I don’t need you, Miss *Abigail Sprink*, telling me what to do anymore.” Iris met her mother’s gaze with an intimidating stare. “It’s really people like *you* who make this world worse than it should be.”