

Heartaches – Bad Boy Vibes

By H M Irwing

Prologue

Anna Walters-Simmons wrinkled her nose in distaste as the strong scent of the freshly brewing storm mingled with the smell of damp earth, freshly tossed. The dreary skies matched the tears streaking down the porcelain perfection of her plump cheeks. The heavens, grey and heavy with rain-filled clouds, sent its own rumble of disgust over the proceedings below.

Dressed in sombre black, a solemn crowd gathered around the glossy rectangular frame being lowered cautiously into the damp ground. To all intents and purposes, the gathered crowd appeared as morose as the event they attended, but only God knew what they truly felt for the man lying within, in quiet repose, a stance entirely in contrast to his otherwise volatile nature, when alive. The priest, used to such moods at these events, stood at the head sombrely reciting a prayer from the Bible. But then thunder rang out loud and booming across the grey skies, and that was closely followed by a flash of highly artistic pyrotechnics. The listening mourners lost their purposeful sombre masks then and shifted impatiently on anxious feet, casting worried glances skywards as nature continued to threaten an outburst of a downpour.

But then the murmuring from the priest desisted and the funeral was over. The crowd began to disperse.

“Anna, how are you doing?” The inquiry came from an elderly gentleman Anna didn’t know. “I am sorry for your loss.”

Anna pushed back the dark glasses on the bridge of her nose and surreptitiously sniffed before she nodded her acceptance. She even managed a tight smile in return. She watched as the man moved on, this time to gather with the others about her mother. To a normal widow, such words of condolence offered no consolation over the loss suffered. With Jane Simmons, there was only indifference, even if she too teared helplessly behind the cover of dark glasses.

Neither Anna nor her mother, Jane, cried for the man who lie dead. Theirs were not the tears of sorrow for their loss. Indeed, the sudden demise of John Simmons was no loss to anyone.

No, theirs were the tears of frustration- for the man who lived still.

The dark glasses that covered most of Jane’s face, a contrary accessory to present weather conditions, did more than hide those tear reddened eyes. They concealed the brush of purple and lacklustre green that surrounded those tearing green eyes. Nothing was revealed to the curious and intrusive onlookers. None of what she was feeling or any of what she was suffering.

Jane Simmons, thin and frail on the outside to match what she truly was on the inside, bore some watching. And instinctively she knew that...and she knew also that she was being watched. Her head tilted subtly to the side in a quiet acknowledgment to Anna’s silent scrutiny,

secure in the knowledge that her daughter, at least, was always there, to look out for her. With two husbands already six feet under, it was no small worrying matter.

But Anna herself, was not free to care for her mother as she would have liked. Turning away, with an anxious glance, Anna looked back to the dark casket that was being lowered into the ground.

Her sigh of relief left her lips in a soft puff of fogged air. But that was only apt, for the chill in the air matched that of her heart.

“Sorry, for the loss of your father.”

Another well-wisher pressed in her unwanted attentions and reached out to envelope Anna in a warm hug. But as expected, the heat from her embrace refused to penetrate Anna’s chilled bones.

A movement at the corner of her eyes drew her immediate attention. Jerking her head to her left, she caught sight of the man who set John Simmons en route to his final destination. His dark head bobbed along as he weaved his way through the dispersing crowd to come to a stop facing her, across the casket that was slowly being covered in soggy earth. His wry grin sent her heart thumping again in renewed fear and ever rising panic.

“Your father was a great man,” murmured the lady, releasing Anna from her grasp and no doubt moving on to her mother.

Anna shivered at the intense chill moving down her spine. There was only one person she feared more than the man already lying dead in the ground before her, and that was the man she was presently staring at. Half afraid, but unable to tear her gaze away from the quiet menace that shadowed Brian Simmons, Anna’s green gaze didn’t waver from where they rested, on the darkly knowing eyes of Brian Simmons.

The lady well-wisher had been wrong. They all had been. The man in the casket was not her father. He had never been her father in all the eight years he remained married to her mother.

John Simmons had only ever been a father to one person-his son and murderer, Brian Simmons.

Chapter 1

Six months later

The rain pattered hard on the awning outside her window. It was another cold, wet day in the Melbourne north-west suburbs. But the noisy drops fell unheeded by the two women within.

“What do you think of this one?”

Anna Simmons held the straps of a scanty, scarcely there, itty bitty bit of a dress up for her friend’s inspection.

“I like the black,” offered Yasmin Yusuf, on a positive note but then proceeded to expound all the negativity with a few well-chosen words, “But where’s the dress?”

Anna eyed her best and only friend with her usual narrow eyed grin. But Yasmin only shrugged her own thin shoulders in return. Shaking her head, Anna bit back an otherwise scathing reply. Yasmin’s view was only to be expected. Shrouded as she was in her favourite, yards of loose, flowing endless black, she, naturally, saw a clear objection to the only difference in their attire—the lack of actual fabric in her choice.

“Matt would love it,” Anna felt compelled to point out. For it was true, her boyfriend Matt, liked her in as little clothing as was possible. And even if she, herself, felt more than a little awkward wearing such clothing, she aimed to please Matt.

Matt was her sole source of happiness. And after an eight year draught of the emotion, she was more than happy to embrace it at any opportunity given. And Matt gave her plenty to be happy about. He was by far the most handsome man at the vocational college she attended. At nineteen to her eighteen years of age, they shared much in common. But mostly it was his blond, artfully dishevelled locks and big blue eyes that drew her in. Of course his stocky brawn was appreciated for sinewy appeal. In contrast, her chest stacked packed on the rack and that was not all she was carrying. With bumps to her front to match that of her behind, Anna wore flab as Yasmin wore clothes—loose hanging and all a floating.

Her spare handles aside, it was her lack of book smarts that actually got to her. But it was really the combination of the two that set peers to mock and humiliate her. Prone to bullies, Anna was mostly over being affected by it, but now that she had a boyfriend, the old insecurities kept bounding up anew. But thus far, Matt Preston, has been all that she’d ever hoped a boyfriend could be. Compassionate and caring, but most importantly, her saviour. No longer did she have to walk the halls of school being made the butt of jokes or just laughed at by bullies. On the arms of Matt, all it took was a cute frown to crumple his forehead, and the bullies simply dematerialised.

So if Matt Preston wanted to see her in dresses that showed her off, then by God she would wear it.

Gumption aside, Anna looked doubtfully at the tiny black dress she had ordered online. It certainly hadn't looked as small on the web. But then that was the reliability of online shopping for you.

"I could try it on," Anna suggested a little hopefully. Perhaps it only looked small.

"Not if you're planning to have me see you in it." Yasmin had no compunction in refuting that idea. "Uh-uh! If you want my opinion, just return it."

Anna frowned at her, stubbornly unwilling to admit she may have it right. It was not something she'd want to see herself. Her bountiful chest would do its best to flop out of its top for sure. But then, Anna had not wanted Yasmin's opinion to begin with. She was not the one who invited her over. And more importantly, it was not her Yasmin Yusuf made appoint to pop by daily to see.

No. Yasmin's reasons for visiting at all laid with her unfounded, inexplicable infatuation with Anna's murderous stepbrother, Brian. It didn't seem to matter to her that Brian was unemployed or verbally abusive or that for a twenty-five year old, he insisted on living off her mother.

With no blood relations whatsoever, Brian Simmons had popped up out of the blue one day, announcing his existence to them for the very first time as son to John Simmons, and the very next day, sentenced his father to an indefinite hiatus, bound no doubt for the netherworld.

Anna was only ten when her life *first* turned on its heel. Daniel Walters died, leaving Anna and her mother alone in the world. After twelve years of marriage to a wonderfully loving man, Jane Walters had done the only thing she could to console herself to her loss. She turned to John Simmons. And a whirlwind of romance later, married him, only to invite the devil himself into their home.

But the devil's son followed in his father's wake, if not soon enough, then eventually-eight years later, Brian Simmons showed up at their door unexpectedly, running from the law and seeking refuge from a father who didn't want him. A father who had long ago abandoned him and his mother to marry one Jane Walters. To say Brian was displeased with his father was an absolute understatement of true feelings. But as actions spelt louder than words, Brian wore his on his sleeves when one punch later, John Simmons moved out of their home forever and on to the cemetery.

Not being too popular a fellow with the coppers, the blue and whites were happy enough to rule off his death a bar brawl fluke. A reasonable enough assumption to be made given that his body was found doused in liquor outside a disreputable tap room.

The Walters-Simmons women had done their best these past six months to make do, but it was not easy tippy toeing about a murderer in the house. Not when Brian did his best to make his sardonic and callous presence felt. Forcing them to keep to themselves and keep quiet about what really happened. Being held hostage took on a new meaning in the Simmons household. Especially when all parties were allowed to move out and about freely, all the while not feeling in the least free at all.

But the six months since John Simmons death had not brought all that was bad into Anna's life. Matt Preston had turned up in her life just about then too. Matt, and his brother Jason, had joined her vocational college, following a transfer in teacher-their dad, Peter Preston.

Matt had seen how Anna was treated by her peers and despite it all, asked her out on a date. And they had been dating ever since, much to her mum's and Yasmin's dismay.

Jane Simmons had an odd view altogether over her relationship with Matt. She wanted Anna involved in that way, only not with Matt, but with Yasmin.

"It is hard to think out of the box, Anna. Not at all easy to overcome the accepted perception of what is normal. But perhaps, you and I were never meant to enjoy what most experience. The normalcy of a man and woman relationship. Your Dad of course was the unique exception, and the risks in proving that not the exception but the rule, is too great. I only want you to be happy. And Yasmin is such a nice girl..."

Never mind that neither Yasmin nor Anna swung that way, Jane was bent on encouraging Anna towards uncharted paths. Uncharted by the Walters-Simmons females, at least.

However, the lack of sexual attraction aside, Anna was not all that comfortable with Yasmin either. The two were polar opposites. Their views over everything clashed vibrantly. And where Yasmin was outwardly quiet spoken with others, she was very vocal with Anna herself. She was especially vocal in her defence of Brian. And that was something she could barely tolerate. Yet best friends, or indeed any friends, were terribly hard to come by.

Anna, wanting to spare her friend a future of hurt and abuse, had readily told her all. She spoke of her own experiences and that of her mother, and while not quite pointing out Brian's murderous tendencies, she did cover everything else about him. And that was plenty in itself. Verbally abusive aside, Anna wouldn't put it past him to lash out physically as well. He was rather decidedly his father's son after all.

But Yasmin was purposefully deaf to her words. Instead she twisted and turned all her cautionary words against her.

"Brian is a man's man. He is strong and virile, it takes a feminine hand to handle him," she said smugly, brushing off Anna's warnings callously.

There was no use to say more after that. Knowing it was clearly hopeless to say otherwise, it was Anna's turn to turn a blind eye instead.

"You know, Brian should be back from the gym already," said Anna, knowing that was one sure way to send Yasmin off on hers.

"Oh my God, look at the time!" gushed Yasmin, swiftly rising to her feet. "I can't believe you kept me this long looking over your clothes. If you want my opinion, you should not be going to that concert at all. All kinds of things happen at these events. Drugs, booze, rape." Shaking her head, she reached for her bag and swept out the door without another word.

Anna reached out to slam it shut after her, but Yasmin was back before she was even gone.

“Oh,” Yasmin muttered, mockingly. “And I thought we should just try this,” she said before leaning in, reaching out, and sliding her hands into Anna’s unbound hair. She drew closer staring into Anna’s startled eyes speculatively before firmly pressing her lips to hers. After another moment’s hesitation she dived in for a quick taste and then was gone.

Anna slammed the door shut after her breathing hard in agitation. The nerve! It must have been her mother’s doing, turning Yasmin’s head to try something like that. What had she been thinking? Anna lifted the back of her hand to rub at her lips.

Was this the last she would see of Yasmin? Her one and only, if somewhat contrary, friend.

Anna stared after her closed door forlornly. She had been fluttering about in nervous excitement over the past two days since Matt had raised the invite. It was to be her first outdoor, all night rave concert. It was why she’d spent hours just yesterday pouring over every website in search of just the right dress.

Only to find it was too short and, according to Yasmin, too vulgar. But the clock was ticking, and as she couldn’t quite decide on her choice of dress yet, she’d take a shower first. Her hair and make-up would be next and then, she would decide on something suitable to wear.

Anna disappeared into the bathroom. And then not twenty minutes later, she emerged out again amidst a billow of steam. Her towel hung damp off her arm as she bent over to run it through her wet hair, squeezing the excess moisture into it as she went. She made for the floor length mirror in her room. Then wrapping the inadequate length of her wet towel about her frame, she moved over to study her reflection, deciding on an appropriate hair style.

She pursed her pink pouty lips and swept her glossy black hair up to the side, then pulled back the loose strands and held it high. Tilting her head then turning it side to side, she studied her reflection in the mirror from every angle.

Then sighed.

It would take a lot to sort out the mess that was Anna Simmons in the four short hours before her. Anna reached out to wipe away the moisture that was fogging up the mirror. Her towel started to slip down her huge breasts, so she released her hold on her damp hair and reached down to jerk it back into place, only to stop and simply whip it off. Feeling panicky, she padded naked towards her closet space to rummage around frantically for something, anything to wear. And came up with nothing. *She was so freaking screwed.*

Giving up she dashed back to her original plan and set about to do her hair first. Dragging out her straightener, she plugged it in and snapped it on, but it instantly fused. With a muffled shriek, Anna swiftly pulled it off the wall unplugging it and snapping the switch off in one motion. Crossing her hands palm down to clutch at her heaving chest, just where her racing heart tried its best to leap up and then down her throat.

“You are a clumsy ass,” said a deep voice right behind her, startling her into shrieking again. He reached out to clamp his hand over her mouth to silence her, and at the same time dropped his other hand to grope at her said ass.

“Matt! You scared the shits out of me,” she warbled out inaudibly. Her words muffled by the hand wrapped tight about her lush lips.

His chuckle came soft and unperturbed, to rumble in her ear.

Anna shuddered but then tried to wiggle loose, still enraged at the fright he gave her.

His hold remained firm. The only concession to her struggles was that the hand that gripped her ass moved to cup her front instead and hauled her ass back, up against his hardness. Anna’s struggles ceased, and she panted for more.

“I like you all wet for me,” he whispered in her ear. Anna shuddered but stubbornly denied anyway, “I’m not. I’m just wet from my shower.”

He moved the hand that cupped her to slip a finger inside before he said huskily, “You looked plenty wet to me.” He dipped another finger in and she flushed to hear it slushing as it slid in. “So wet for me,” he whispered.

Anna moaned and shifted her legs, trapping his hand where it was, trying to hold his fingers in, and as always, instantly wanting more.

“Matt...*please*,” she moaned into the hand clamped over her mouth. The sound came out muffled.

“What...what is it? What did you say?” he asked annoyingly, not removing his hand away from her mouth. Anna moaned again in frustration and wiggled her ass trying to get him to release her once more. Her hands reached up to pull at his, trying to remove it from its firm hold over her lips.

“Shh...,” he said soothingly, “You wouldn’t want anyone to know I am up here in your room with you, now would you?”

Anna tilted her head back to glare up at him, but Matt did not notice as his gaze was fixed, peering over her shoulders at her heaving breasts. She squirmed and wiggled again trying to break loose, and her breasts just bounced and bobbed beneath his fascinated gaze.

Rap rap rap!

She jolted in his clutches as someone pounded at her door, “Anna? Anna! Your mum want’s you down for tea.”

Brian called out from the other side of the door. Her blood froze in her veins. The heat of earlier chilled swiftly.

Anna raised pleading eyes up to Matt needing him to release her. She was not sure if the door to her room was even locked. How else had Brian managed to get in there?

But Matt finally took pity on her and released her lips so she could respond. Anna faltered then urgently started to say, “Tell mum...,” but her voice trailed off as Matt shifted that hand down

south to clutch at her heaving mounds. His lips were preoccupied with raining kisses down her neck. Then he did the unthinkable and stuck his tongue into her ear. She let out a pleasurable shriek in reflex, and the door knob to her room rattled in response.

Anna almost shirked in fright at that, but Matt only laughed at her panic. His husky laugh, low and rumbling, sending a wave of shivers coursing down her spine.

“I’m getting ready. Tell mum I’ll be down later,” she finally managed to gasp out.

“Much later,” Matt whispered wickedly in her ear.

“I have to get ready, and I have nothing to wear,” she said then plaintively, hearing the footsteps move away from the other side of the door.

“Don’t wear anything on my account. You already know I prefer you naked at best,” he said seriously.

Anna could only shake her head at him. She did know that. He took every opportunity he could to get her naked ever since he first had her. He said she was a natural fuck, and he loved doing that to her. She had no idea what he meant by that. Matt had been her first, but Anna was not his first so she would hope he knew what he was on about and left it to him.

Anna disengaged herself from his grasping hands with some effort, then strutted back to her closet knowing he was eyeing her jiggling ass as she went. She made sure to give it an extra bounce with each stride. But then she was lifted and tossed onto her bed for her efforts. Then Matt was leaping on the bed to join her doing his rough bear growl impersonation. She knew he wanted nothing more than to maul her over and ravage her with his lust filled self. So she put on a good show of squealing for her release before happily succumbing to his arduous demands.

Afterwards, leaving her only fifteen minutes to get ready, Anna sped around applying makeup and throwing on whatever pieces of clothing Matt dished out to her from an intense search through her mess of a closet.

Anna was not in the least bit surprised, when she emerged through the low neck of her top, to find herself clad in the very same tiny black dress.

High heels complemented the halter neck black dress, and then she was ready to party all night long at her very first rave concert.

Chapter 2

Not far down the lane, in that same Melbourne suburb, it was not just the darkness of the falling night that was creeping along so stealthily in the hidden alleyways and along the quiet streets. Another as dark and as silent, moved along in unhurried strides. In strides that bore a close resemblance to the weariness of a returning soldier. With sure steps that marked his familiarity with the route he took, the soldier moved off the main streets and on to another back lane. His regulation issued boots tread carelessly through the murky puddles left over from the earlier downpour. The glint of metal catching the faint glimmer of light peeping through the cloud packed skies. It was his weapon of peace, but not necessarily his weapon of choice. The lane winded and turned, then the familiar dark shape of the rustic cottage loomed up ahead, snagging his attention. His pace picked up in speed.

“Rafael Luis Brown!”

The call rang out loud and clear across the abandoned alley. Its shrill tones bringing back old-long forgotten memories. Deliberately forgotten. Rafe stretched his long legs out in a softly loping stride before he allowed the momentum of his naturally agile body to swing up in an arch and launch his frame over the low brick wall. A couple of quick strides later and he was there, back at his old home, facing a woman- not his mother but her sister. Aunt Bella.

“Rafe? I thought it was you. I can recognise you anywhere,” exclaimed Aunt Bella. It was evident that she had parked herself on the little patio to wait for him.

“You knew I was coming. You got my message,” pointed out Rafe, matter-of-factly, before he took the few steps up, two at a time. He slung his satchel down at her feet before he bent over to pick his only living relative he was close to, up into his strong arms.

“Don’t cheek me boy. I can see being in the army has done you no good,” she declared beaming up at him.

She had no idea. Darkness swirled at the back of his mind threatening to drown out the present. *No, not now.* Shaking his head and with it the haunting memories, he deliberately tugged the corners of his lips up in his signature lop sided smile. His large milk chocolate eyes turned meltingly gold, but all Aunt Bella did was lift her open palm up to tap gently if threateningly at her cheek. His grin widened before he held her tighter in a bear hug. She scolded and grumbled, demanding he put her back down but Rafe’s eyes only teared with the silent joy of once again being back with the ones he loved.

A high whine of distress roused his attention away. Jerking to attention, he turned toward the closed patio door. Releasing his aunt back onto her unsteady feet, he swung around back in action. With an unbridled eagerness, he lunged into the darkened interior of the house lit only by a stray bulb, here and there, and followed the sounds of the softly urging whine.

“Bruno, my boy,” cried out Rafe hoarsely, dropping down onto his knees to slide down the well-worn wooden floors across the short distance. He came to a stop beside the wagging tail of his beloved dog, Bruno.

“Bruno, Bruno, Bruno,” he murmured with a heartfelt ache, borne of acute loneliness for the longest time. “God, I have missed you...so bad,” he mumbled almost brokenly, reaching out to envelope his aged dog into his warm embrace. He buried his face into the warm fur of his neck and breathed in the scent that was pure...dog. “God but you actually smell good, old boy.”

Bruno reached out to feebly lick at Rafe’s face. At thirteen years of age, Bruno was already tittering on the brink, but that didn’t matter so much to Rafe. He hadn’t really known he was in a dire need to see his beloved face. And now he had. He had held Bruno in his arms once again after the longest...longest time. At just that moment, his world was great again. At just that moment, life was liveable once again. So much joy from his old mangy dog. Rafe blinked back tears of joy, now, as he shook his head ruefully over his own ridiculousness.

But Bruno had meant so much to him. He had been there for him through thick and thin. And he was there for him once again...when he had need for him most, despite all the horrors of his past. He knew he had never needed Bruno or his aunt Bella more than he did now. Now as a full grown man. Rafe didn’t feel ashamed for needing them as he did. They were all he had. All he ever had. There was no shame in needing those you loved. And love was really the only thing worth living for. Everything else...everyone else, was just treacherous.

“Thirteen years is a long time old boy,” murmured Rafe, running a caressing hand shakily through his white speck coat. Bruno’s fur was no longer as soft as it used to be. And he still remembered that exact softness of the newborn pup.

It had been cold, dark day, that day when Bruno the pup had first fallen into his lap. Darkness had been fast approaching...

Rafe looked out the window and gazed out at the approaching dusk. He had a few moments more, possibly just a couple of minutes, before he returned. He would savour the peace and quiet, so he contentedly ignored the squeaky stillness in the house and concentrated on simply staring out that window at the darkening skies beyond it. Rafe kept his mind blank from all thoughts that would disturb this peace, this moment of stolen bliss. He looked down at the stub of narcotics in his hand and knew instinctively that this time...this time, he would be caught.

Lifting it to his lips, he placed it just right before drawing in a sharp short breath. His concentration was complete on the bliss that would pour through him from that one short gesture. Rafe was reluctant to exhale, reluctant to release the pleasure from that one small puff. So he delayed it as long as he could, but he knew he had to and so he did, so slowly, gradually releasing the toxic smoke into short puffs of air. Then he heaved great big gasps trying to draw in some air. It was difficult, but Rafe managed, coughing along as he did. Just as he managed to settle himself down and gather his scattered wits back, he had a craving for yet another drought.

A hand came out of nowhere and slapped the cancer stick right out of his unsteady hand. Rafe made a grasping reach for it, but he was too slow. Those damn things were more potent than he’d thought. Rafe watched helplessly as the short stub fell to the floor to join its pair and then gasped in horror as a rough shod boot brutally stomped on it, hammering the last of the sparks out as it stomped repeatedly on the stubs. Then that hand swung towards him, aiming a blow. Rafe could not even duck low as he saw it coming.

He howled like a kid in pain. For that was what he had been, a thirteen year old kid in pain. He lifted his hand away from his nose to check, and sure enough it was red with blood. That had him howling even more. The bliss from the stub was forgotten as again that hand rammed into him, this time knocking him to the floor. Rafe clutched at his stomach with one hand, held his nose together with the other, and howled in pain as furious tears poured out of his eyes.

"You f-ing asshole you broke my nose!" Rafe yelled out stupidly and earned himself several more kicks and one that broke a rib.

"Finish the job damn you! Is it not enough you put my mother in her grave? Why stop with her when you can finish me off as well?" Rafe yelled again stupidly, and the kicks he received from that sent him off to join that darkness that shrouded the house.

Night had finally fallen.

But when he woke up it was to Bruno the pup, licking at his face...and Aunt Bella's worried countenance peering down at him.

That had been a painful memory that had haunted him for the better part of his life. His mum had died just that Winter. He hadn't known why back then, why his dad had resorted to such brutality, but he knew now. She had been pregnant with another man's child. Just as she had been when she was carrying him. It hadn't mattered to his dad that it was the very same man who had sired Rafe, who had gotten her pregnant again. Thirteen years later Samantha Russo Brown had made that same mistake and suffered the consequence for it.

Dad had not lasted long after delivering that knocking to, the authorities had come for him and not only took him down for what he'd done to Rafe, but also what he'd done to his mother. Still it wasn't his dad, James Brown that he hated most in the world. That award had gone on to his real father, the anonymous Peter P. The man who had taken advantage of his mother, not once, but twice.

But only till late. Now he had a new evil to hate even more. An evil so fearsome all his exposure in the Syrian war came to nothing in comparison.