

Episode 35: August 28-31, 2000

(INTRO MUSIC)

Scene 35.1

OLIVIA

Hello listeners! I am back! And today I have an extra special treat for you. Kat - as you all know her - has agreed to record a conversation with me. She listens to the show now - my parents do too, which is... which is odd for me. But I like that they know what is going on. Mama actually said it was a good way to know what I am up to and where I am. *(smiles)* Anyway. Kat and I will be talking in about half an hour, which gives me - and you dear listeners - time to listen to this week's voice mails. So last week there were no voice mails, apparently they talked on the phone instead, and the week before that they both reported back from better-than-expected week-ends with the in-laws, Kat got a small part in EastEnders and... Johnno hit her. Welcome... to the year 2000!

Scene 35.2

(Modem dial-up tone) (click)

JESS

Hello Kat, it was wonderful talking to you yesterday. I'm so sorry if I pushed you too much on talking about Johnno. Of course you don't have to talk about any of it if you don't want to. I'm just... I worry. A lot. Which is what I do, of course. You know me. And thank you for parsing all my worries and making them seem manageable. That really is your super power. You are incredible. I am so lucky to have you in my life. I- *(stops herself)* So, last night Bri *(Bree)* had organized a dinner for me - I didn't know where, so was a little nervous, but also excited 'cause I trust Bri *(Bree)* and turns out it was at the café where she works - Gerrie's! Was more like a party with food than a sit-down dinner which was perfect. Maia had decorated beautifully, and Bri *(Bree)* and Tia had made wonderful finger food - Brie puffs of course - but also focaccia and mini burgers and all sorts of deliciousness. And cupcakes! Bri *(Bree)* had made dozens of tiny adorable cupcakes instead of cake and it was gorgeous. And so many of the friends I have made were there, and Rachel was radiant and I forgot all about the stress of moving. It was glorious. *(beat)* Today I'm back in organizing mode, but I feel energized after talking to you and having such a wonderful night last night feeling so... at home. So, today I have-

(footsteps during previous)

MAIA

(yelling) Jess? You home?

JESS

(yelling) Come in Maia!

MAIA

(opens door) I need your help.

JESS

Sure. I'm recording for Kat, but I can be done in a minute.

MAIA

No, nothing practical for once. (smiles) I want to talk to you.
(sits down) And Kat might as well hear it too - maybe she has some advice.

JESS

All right. I'm intrigued.

MAIA

I'm thinking of going back to school.

JESS

Right.

MAIA

It's been *years* since I left university, but... I've been thinking.

JESS

What are you thinking of studying?

MAIA

Not sure. My degree is in fine arts, of course, but I think I need something that will... lead to employment I guess. (small laugh) That sounds depressing. I love freelance work, and the freedom that comes with that but... It is also exhausting to constantly have to find new work.

JESS

I can understand that. What about your library job?

MAIA

I enjoy it, I love meeting new people and being around books, but I could never be a librarian.

JESS

Why not?

MAIA

They have to be good with computers. I can just about work the library computer for registering books and making library cards, but proper librarians have to be great at IT and I definitely am not.

JESS

So what do you see yourself doing?

MAIA

Something to do with art, preferably, but that gives a bit more of a steady paycheck... Ugh. Feel like I am getting old and boring and betraying my dreams (*sighs*).

JESS

Really?

MAIA

Yeah. Or... maybe not. I'll always make art, no matter what else I do. But the idea of being a full-time artist and being able to support myself through creating... Maybe it is time to realize that is not happening.

JESS

Maybe you've outgrown that dream?

MAIA

Huh. (*slowly*) Yeah. Maybe I have.

JESS

So what else can you do that is art-related.... Graphic design? Writing about art, um, journalism? Or... talking to people about art somehow...? Oh! You should go talk to one of the guidance counsellors at the university! Except it's not called that... Hang on (digs among papers) here we go - it's called course advice I think, if you go talk to someone at one of the student centers they should be able to help.

MAIA

Thanks. And... you're a student... do you think I could do it? I feel **very** out of practice. (*smiles*)

JESS

Of course you could. You'll get back to it again in no time. If that's what you end up deciding, of course. Could be you figure something out that doesn't mean going back to school.

MAIA

Could be. (*smiles*) Thanks. I knew you'd have some advice.

JESS

(*smiles*) Feels like I've barely said anything. But happy to help if I can.

MAIA

I'll take you up on that. (gets up) Should go start dinner. Wanna help?

JESS

Sure! (*smiles*) As long as there are tasks befitting my skill level.

MAIA

(*laughs*) Will chopping veggies do?

JESS

(*laughs*) Perfect!

MAIA

(*smiles*) See you in the kitchen. (*footsteps*)

JESS

Be right there. (*to KAT*) So - I guess Maia would be grateful for any advice you may have, too. I had no idea they were thinking of going back to school, but it makes sense. Better go. Love you!

(clicks)

Scene 35.3

(Modem dial-up tone) (click)

KIRSTEN

Hej min skat! Jeg håber at flyrejseren gik godt! Det var så godt at bruge tid sammen med dig. Du kan altid komme her, hvis det er du har brug for det. Det ved du. Mor betaler. Okay? Kram til dig lille skat!

(clicks)

Scene 35.4

(Modem dial-up tone) (click)

KAT

Hello Jess. It's fine. It was amazing talking to you. Always is. (*smiles*) Suppose I need to talk about some things in smaller doses... I'm back in London. I had some really good days with my mother - we talked quite a bit and I think she is less worried. And we went on so many walks - beautiful evening walks around Trollhättan - there is a calm and quiet in a smaller city that you never get in London. So it was restful. And now I am back. Time to get excited about my EastEnders part again - think I know the script backwards and forwards at this point! But can't hurt to read it some more... Let's see. Johnno is at work right now, but he has thrown together some sort of birthday bash for me tomorrow night. Should be

fun. (*sigh*) Working tonight. But kind of looking forward to it too - getting back into my routine and my inventory lists... (*laughs*) Never thought I'd say that! And... you will be a wonderful mother, you know. You are so loving and thoughtful. I know you are afraid you will fall into some of your parents' patterns but you are *so* different from them. And Bri (*Bree*) is too. Are you sure you are related? (*small laugh*) Kidding! I know. I know. But you can find a different way of parenting, you know. And you will. (*sighs*) You can... borrow my mother, you know. If you want to hash out some parenting problems or whatever. Hash out? Is that right? Talk out? (*small laugh*) Hash in Swedish is pot... Anyway. I hope... (*near tears*) I hope I will someday get to have those conversations with her too, of course. But there's enough of her to go around. If you want. (*smiles*)

(sound of front door opening)

KAT

(*continues*) Johnno's home, better go! Oceans!

(clicks)

Scene 35.5

OLIVIA

Hello again, this is Olivia. It's strange to hear Kat in 2000 when I am just about to talk to her in the now... But no crisis this week, thankfully. And... for the record. My parents have been brilliant. I couldn't wish for any better. It's just now they are... breaking up it's ... it's hard for me. And it's maybe harder *because* they've been so good, and loving, and stable. Suppose I am spoiled. (*sigh*) So many of my friends have separated or divorced parents and it's seemed so... normal maybe? But now it is happening to me I feel like (*near tears*) all my foundations are crumbling... and... yeah. (*pulls herself together*) Time to make the call. Let's see if I can get Skype to work... (*clicks, distracted*) Wish Tammi was here to help me, but she's found some RPG folks here and they're setting up a new campaign. (*clicks*) There, I think. (Skype call sound, click)

KAT

Hello?

OLIVIA

Aunt Ina (*EE-na*)!

KAT

Liv! I can hear you, but I can't see you.

OLIVIA

Me neither, hang on. (clicks)

KAT
There you are! Now how... (clicks)

OLIVIA
Camera symbol?

KAT
(click) There!

OLIVIA
I can see you! Hello!

KAT
Hello lovely Liv! How are you?

OLIVIA
(*smiles*) I'm good. You?

KAT
(*smiles*) Very well.

OLIVIA
Thanks for agreeing to do this.

KAT
(*laughs*) Of course. Anything for you! Though everyone's advised me against it, my agent, my lawyer... They say it will 'damage my image'. (*smiles*) I really don't care.

OLIVIA
You sure? I can cut this part and call you 'Kat' if you like.

KAT
I'm sure. Hey, I'm a 40-something actress, any press is good press.

OLIVIA
(*laughs, then serious*) You think there will be press?

KAT
Probably. "Podcast reveals: Ina Fischer abused by boyfriend"
Completely disregarding the fact it was twenty years ago... (*smiles*)
Should be good for your podcast, though.

OLIVIA
I... I never meant-

KAT
I know. I've listened to the whole thing. I understand, Liv. It's
OK.

OLIVIA
Thank you. So... maybe I should start by asking about your name.

KAT

(smiles) It's actually related to what is happening in those voice mails you are playing. After the relationship with Johnno ended - strange to say his name now - haven't thought about it, all of this for so long, Liv. Your podcast has brought it all back.

OLIVIA

I'm sorry.

KAT

Don't be. It is so long ago now. Of course there is still pain there - trauma never really goes away. But like I told you when we first spoke about it - I really think this story needs to be told. Far too many enter into abusive relationships and don't realize it until it's too late. Anyway... Where was I?

OLIVIA

Your name.

KAT

Right, the name. You know my full name is Katarina, but I don't think anyone but my mother and school teachers have ever used that.

Growing up, I was always Ina or Kat or Katta with my friends. And then when I moved to London I thought I'd better pick one of them to avoid confusion, so I was Kat. And then - I was pretty broken after that relationship, and I felt like reinventing myself. Took some time before your mum got used to Ina, though!

OLIVIA

(smiles) I can imagine. It took me a while to figure out who you were.

KAT

(laughs) I heard! And I get that.

OLIVIA

So... there are many voice mails left, and the listeners and I don't know what happened to you in the remainder of the year 2000.

KAT

Spoilers! But I already have spoiled something, right? That the relationship ends. Ended? I get confused on the tenses!

OLIVIA

Oh me too!

KAT

Anyway. You can cut that if you want.

OLIVIA

I'll leave it in. Think it's a relief to know that it does end. Not that we know when.

KAT
OK.

OLIVIA
I suppose... I'll just let you say whatever you want to say about what happened back then.

KAT
Think I've said quite a lot. So, no spoilers... Hm... When Johnno and I got together I thought I really had to give the relationship a chance, you know? I felt like I hadn't given previous relationships the opportunity to develop, like I hadn't been fully on board, and I felt it was time. Really bad timing, let me tell you! I was... almost 24, so a little older than you but not much. I dived in head first and I worked... *(some emotion creeps in)* I worked so hard at it. I worked so hard at everything and I didn't see he wasn't putting in the same work. And I didn't see he was putting me down and cutting me off from my friends, from my mother. And the more... tangible forms of abuse... took me years to admit even to myself. Years and years of therapy. *(small laugh)* It's like... I couldn't admit what was going on, if I did I would have to face that I had to end it, and that was... too hard. So much got repressed, I'm not sure all of it has surfaced, even now. Which is why re-listening to it is probably good, even if it is painful.

OLIVIA
All right.

KAT
But there is also so much light and joy on there! Like your mum, hearing the beginnings of our long-distance friendship... We're still at it, as you know. *(smiles)* Friends across various oceans for over 20 years at this point. Though life and jobs and everything else means we're not quite in touch weekly anymore. But she is so important to me. And so is your mama. And you. You know that, right?

OLIVIA
I know. But... now they are getting a *(voice breaks)* divorce...

KAT
I know. I am so sorry, Liv.

OLIVIA
Don't you have to, I don't know, pick a side?

KAT
I think in most separations, yes. But this one... *(carefully)* Your parents still have so much love for each other. And it's sad they

are separated, but... Not every great love story lasts forever. And just because it ends, doesn't mean it wasn't great.

OLIVIA

(*unsure*) I... hadn't thought of it like that.

KAT

We all want that happy ending, right? Like in stories - or movies! (*laughs*) But the story goes on, and sometimes what used to make you happy doesn't anymore. There doesn't always have to be villains and victims, sometimes it is simply... life. I admire both of your parents for recognizing that.

OLIVIA

I suppose... It just (*voice breaks*) hurts.

KAT

Oh dearest Liv. I am so sorry. Of course it hurts. No getting around that. Wish I had a magic wand to wave...

OLIVIA

(*smiles through tears*) Yeah - what kind of fairy godmother are you, anyway?

KAT

(*laughs*) The strictly non-religious kind! No magic here!

OLIVIA

But you are sort of my godmother, aren't you?

KAT

Well. Sort of. More like an honorary aunt, really. Of course you have lots of wonderful actual aunts, too!

OLIVIA

(*smiles*) I do.

KAT

Have you seen any of them yet? I mean, you are in Auckland, right?

OLIVIA

Not yet. But I'm planning to.

KAT

Good. (mobile phone buzzing, KAT silences it) Sorry! I should go. Take care of yourself, Liv. Being 20 isn't easy, but you seem much more level-headed than I was at your age.

OLIVIA

(*smiles*) Thanks. I think? Take care of you too! And belated happy birthday!

KAT

Thank you! And - oceans of hugs?

OLIVIA

(laughs) Oceans of hugs!

KAT

Love you, Liv!

OLVIA

Love you! Bye! (clicks) Right. That's it for today, dear listeners.
Talk to you again next week!

(Trailer for The One Stars)

OLIVIA

If you know anything about my biological father - Mike - please let me know, I would very much like to get in touch with him. (pause)

Please e-mail me at y2kpod@gmail.com, find me on Twitter or Instagram @y2kpod. Also check out our webpage, at y2kpod.com, where you can find out more about the show, and, of course, listen to all the episodes. We are also on Apple Podcasts, Google Podcasts, Spotify and wherever you get your podcasts. If you like Y2K, please tell your friends to listen too! And if you want to support the show further - thank you so much - you can do that by going to [patreon.com\[/y2kpod](https://patreon.com/y2kpod) and pledging a monthly amount - from 1 US dollar you get all our episodes early! So if you were a patron, you could check out next week's episode in just a few days. I am so very happy and so grateful to our wonderful amazing patrons! We also have merch - check it out at [Y2Kpod.com\[/merch](http://Y2Kpod.com[/merch). Our amazing intro and outro music is created and recorded by Jake Haws, check out his podcast "Making Music with Jake Haws" to hear more. I'm Olivia, thank you for listening, and welcome back next week when we return to the year 2000.

(OUTRO MUSIC)