

AVOIDING

THE PITY PARTY

THE INSIDER'S SCOOP TO THE STORY

MISSING CHAPTERS

from the Editor's
cutting table

BEST QUOTES

from the author
& the reader's

THE INSIDE STORY...

the story's inspiration
& so much more

A QUICK NOTE
& WELCOME



IN CASE YOU'RE WONDERING,
I WRITE LOTS OF STORIES

All day long if they'd let me!

Delivered with a dash of drama, witty humour and quirky family units, I'm known for reinventing romantic versions of *home*, taking common characters on uncommon journeys as they try to find their own HAPPILY EVER AFTER.

SO, LET'S DO THIS...

AVOIDING THE PITY PARTY

*serving readers since...umm
you found me!*

THE INSIDE STORY

how the heck it came to be

THE FIRST CHAPTER

to indulge at your own leisure

THOSE MISSING CHAPTERS

direct from the editor's floor - yep, I swept them up myself!

THE EXTRA LINKS

the fun stuff

[#AvoidingthePityParty](#) | [#Escape2HEA](#)

AVOIDING THE PITY PARTY

**Runaway brides, bad boys
and big brothers**



Causing a scene in the middle of a marriage ceremony is not how a bride should behave.

Running a marathon in a white wedding gown is not how a bride should behave. Trying to sell an engagement ring in a bar is not how a bride should behave.

And sharing the perfect kiss with a sexy stranger, named Sean, while still in full bridal couture is not how a bride should behave.

But this one did!

All in one night.

So when the loyal and dependable Deanne throws her entire ordered life into chaos, trying to forget her most embarrassing moment is almost impossible—especially when Sean shows up to flip the nuts and bolts of her life’s ordered plans all over again!!

Can Deanne avoid Sean and forget that perfect kiss while pretending her work-home life imbalance is perfectly okay?

If you enjoy quirky characters that test the routines of daily life, you’ll love *Avoiding the Pity Party*, where surviving the break-up blues in suburbia can be filled with inspirational heartfelt fun!

Book your Escape to Happily Ever After by downloading your copy today...

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THE INSIDE STORY

THE RANDOM STUFF ON THIS STORY...



This story was **originally called Hardware Blues**. I'm sure, once you've read it, you'll understand why.

There was some confusion over the Hardware Blues title. Was it about an IT guru? What type of hardware were they playing with? Why was the hardware blue? The impossible probable combinations on misinterpreting a book's title were endless.

So how did I come up the new name, **AVOIDING THE PITY PARTY?**

It's one of the heroine, Deanne's, favourite terms!

So the confusion continued...

Some assumed *AVOIDING THE PITY PARTY* was a self-help book!

Boy, weren't they shocked to read it was something else entirely.

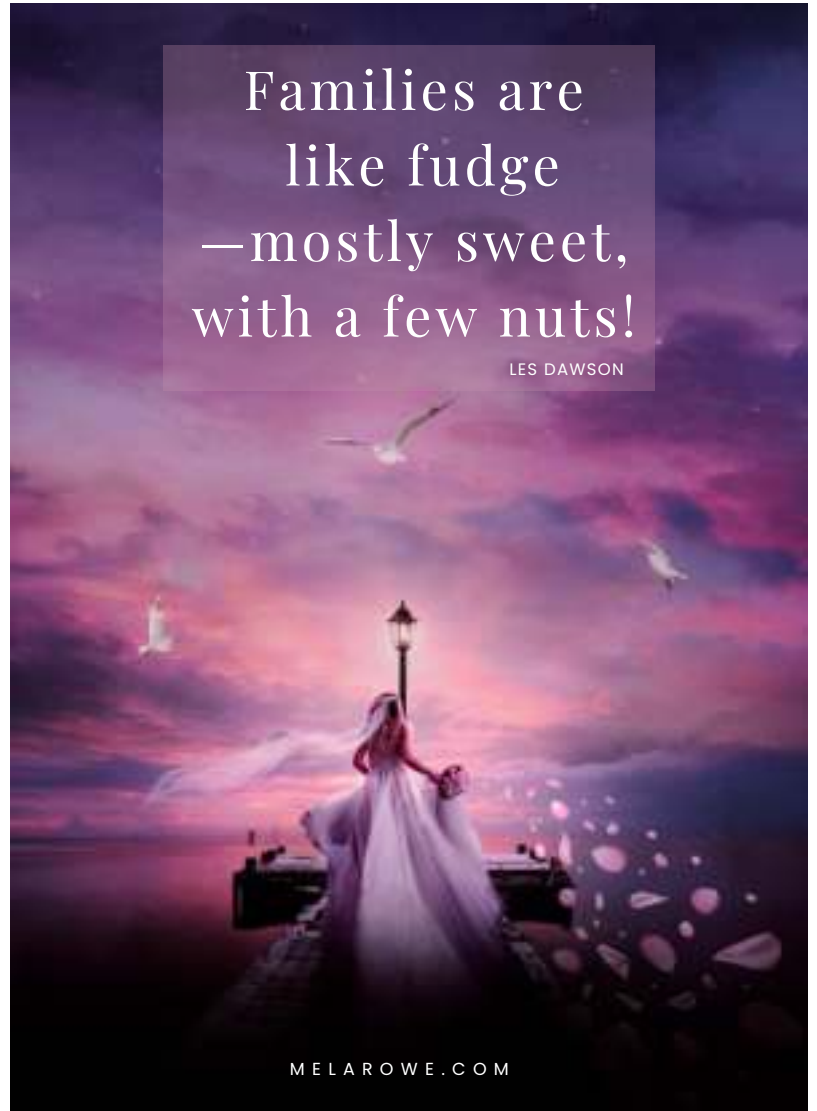
Besides the name, the other changes that occurred from its first release were:

The book's blurb was changed three times.

The cover, four times.

I also found a new editor to help whip it further into shape.

And, I had to put in big letters for overseas readers:



****THIS BOOK IS WRITTEN IN AUSTRALIAN ENGLISH****

Because it seems *Aussie English* is different to *USA English* where many of the first reviews for this book said I couldn't spell...

Lesson learned.

The cover love over the years....



THE FIRST CHAPTER

TO INDULGE IN AT YOUR OWN LEISURE

PLEASE DO NOT PRINT, COPY, OR SHARE THE FOLLOWING WITHOUT THE AUTHOR'S PERMISSION. THIS IS PURELY FOR THE READING PLEASURE OF THE SUBSCRIBERS OF MEL A ROWE'S NEWSLETTER.



ONE

Her stomach spiralled like a stone sliding off the cliff's edge. 'Can I do this?' Deanne Harrison clenched sweaty palms as she peeked through the door's gap to spy on her seated guests. Light streamed through stained-glass windows that haloed the groom standing beside his groomsmen adjusting their suits.

And they all waited for her.

Piped organ music began, and Deanne scooted to the side of the curtain just as the doors opened. 'You can do this, Lou.' She urged the first bridesmaid, who scowled at her. 'Please?' 'Fine.' With a death grip on her delicate floral arrangement that contrasted against her bulging bodybuilder's frame, Lou started down the aisle. Her strapless cocktail gown complimented her bleached hair spiked to near dagger points. In her mannish gait, she hobble-plodded on heels, glaring at the groom, then lurched towards the sidelines to wait the rest of the bridal party's arrival.

AVOIDING THE PITY PARTY CONT...

‘Can’t believe we’re doing this,’ muttered the petite Jane, as the next bridesmaid to walk down the aisle. With each step, Jane choked the stems of her bouquet, while her rogue ringlets sprung-free in their rebellion against the attempted intricate up-do that Deanne knew Jane had tried so hard to achieve. At the end of the aisle, Jane stopped beside Lou, scowled sideways at the groom for all to see, and then forced a smile, as another one of her curls escaped from its clutches.

The matron of honour, the statuesque Clare, made her appearance, with her thin-lipped grimace and red-rimmed eyes, she glared at the groom from the start of the aisle.

‘Clare, it’ll be fine,’ said Deanne, urging her friend on.

‘I hope so.’ Clare raised her chin, her complexion pale against her midnight hair slicked into an elegant French twist. With her graceful, long-legged stride, Clare made short work of the aisle, to stand beside the other bridesmaids. There she faced the crowd, sniffed back tears, and with pursed lips she waited.

At the doorway, the father of the bride, Reg, tugged at his collar, brushed fingers through his grey receding hairline, pushed his glasses up his nose and puffed out ruddy cheeks. He then held out his bent elbow. ‘You ready to do this, luv?’

Deanne nodded beneath the fragile veil. The delicate diamantes detailed within her gown sparkled like tiny rainbows.

She swallowed an oversized lump and tried to shake the tremors in her hands. ‘Let’s do this.’ She wrapped her arm around her father’s extended elbow, re-gripped her bouquet of lilies, and counted. ‘One, two, and three...’ And they stepped in time to the music, hoping her gown’s small train would trail perfectly behind them.

Reg nodded to the gathered guests as they headed down the aisle and at the end of the red-carpet, he unveiled the intended bride.

Deanne couldn’t fool her father when the worry in his eyes mirrored her own.

‘Um?’ Reg’s brow crinkled. He blinked back tears as his teeth clamped on his quivering bottom lip.

Deanne squeezed his hand. ‘It’ll be okay, Dad.’

‘You sure?’

‘I know what I’m doing.’ She hoped.

‘Well, okay then...’ Reg kissed his baby girl on the cheek and replaced her veil. He took his seat in the front row beside his sniffling mother, Nan, where they gripped hands and prepared to watch in teary silence.

AVOIDING THE PITY PARTY CONT...

The groom, Darren, in his tailored suit, turned on his movie-star smile that spread across his spray-tanned features. He swept a hand through his blond hair, and winked at the crowd where his bright blue contact lenses caught the light. He stepped in alongside his wife-to-be and they stood before the Minister and the ceremony began.

The service was well underway when the Minister called out, ‘Should anyone object to this union, speak now or forever hold your peace?’ Darren twitched his shoulders, his palms clasped tightly in front, as beads of sweat trickled down the sides of his face. He licked his lips and stared at the carpet.

Time dragged.

Outside birds twittered. Traffic shuffled. Children’s laughter carried across from the park.

Inside, gowns rustled, paper programmes fanned faces, but no one spoke.

The minister’s chest rose high as he inhaled to continue.

Darren exhaled as his stature relaxed.

‘STOP.’ Deanne flung her veil back as her words reverberated off the walls.

‘What?’ Darren asked.

‘Did you sleep with my cousin, Katrina?’

The crowd gasped.

Darren gulped, blinking fast. Raking fingers through his thick hair, he shared a taut smile at the seated audience. ‘Everyone’s watching,’ he said through gritted over-white teeth.

Deanne’s skirts swished as she turned to search the gathered guests. ‘Katrina, I hear you’re pregnant and congratulations are in order?’

Katrina sat in a low-cut, skin-tight, red dress, a few rows behind Deanne’s dad. Her smudged lips parted, her wide racoon eyes darted between the bride and groom as she sunk lower into her seat.

‘Is it true, Katrina, that you’re pregnant to my future husband?’ Deanne lifted her gown’s hem, kicking out at the train. Her bouquet slapped against her skirts, scattering frosty petals as she stomped down the steps.

AVOIDING THE PITY PARTY CONT...

Katrina sunk lower into her seat, while those around her shuffled aside to give the incoming bride access.

‘Don’t. Lie. To. Me. This is the house of God, and you’ll go straight to hell if you do.’

Katrina lowered her head, as loud, wet sobs echoed off the cathedral ceiling.

‘ANSWER ME.’

‘Yes,’ Katrina said between whimpers.

Deanne cupped a hand behind her ear. ‘I can’t hear you?’

‘Yes. I’m pregnant.’ With makeup smeared and tears flowing, Katrina stood and pointed with a trembling finger. ‘And it’s Darren’s baby.’

The crowd gasped. Their heads pivoted from Katrina to the groom, to the bride, then back again

‘She’s lying.’ Darren frowned. He tugged at his tight collar, then reached for Deanne’s hand. ‘What are you doing, Dee? Not in front of everyone, please?’

Deanne peered up at her intended husband who was handsome. Charming. And what every woman desired. Should she surrender?

Instead, she pulled away, clenched her fist, and punched him.

It was a direct hit.

Darren collapsed on the steps below the altar. He covered his eye, moaning in pain, while everyone remained motionless.

Deanne hitched up her many skirts and sprinted down the aisle. She burst through the church doors and into the blinding sunlight. Jumped the front steps, scattering pigeons in her way, as she cut straight across the road. A car horn blared, and a taxi screeched to a halt, as Deanne ran through the park and never looked back.

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THOSE MISSING CHAPTERS

DIRECT FROM THE EDITOR'S FLOOR - I RESCUED FOR YOU!

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This is purely for the reading pleasure of the subscribers of Mel A ROWE's newsletter.



The original ending of Chapter 1

Authors Note: this scene starts right after Deanne punched Darren, and she's just bolted out the church. (Told in an OMNI POV)

‘You idiot!’ The bridesmaid, Lou, towered over the sprawled groom at the feet of the speechless priest, recovering from Deanne's punch. Her biceps bulged as she fisted Darren’s shirt front, while the guests remained riveted in their seats.

‘Come on Lou, we’ve gotta find her.’ Jane’s tiny fingers stretched to grip Lou’s large arm and tried to push, but the bodybuilder’s mass wouldn’t budge. Unlike Jane’s hair, where another curl jumped free from her pinned scalp.

Clare glared at the cowering groom. ‘I should let Lou beat the crap outta you. But you—’ She spun around and pointed at Katrina who’d started to sink onto the floor. ‘Soooo. Help. You—’

‘Come on you two, we have a bride to rescue.’ Jane grabbed Clare with one hand while she herded Lou along with a slap of her mangled bouquet.

Darren groaned, covering his eye he pushed himself upright. ‘I’ll search for Dee.’ The three bridesmaids turned as Darren rose to his feet.

Then in a flurry of falling petals, the diminutive Jane dashed forward, and with the skill of a Premiership AFL footballer, she kicked the groom straight between the legs. ‘Bastard.’

The crowd gave a collective, ‘Owww,’ and all the males covered their own family jewels.

Clare and Lou cocked eyebrows as they grinned at each other.

‘Come on Jane,’ said Clare, ‘let’s go find Dee.’ Clare reached for Jane’s tiny hand and they followed the trail of fallen petals down the aisle.

Lou hobbled alongside. ‘I hate these shoes, they’re killin’ me. I hate—’

‘Then take ‘em off,’ said Clare, where the trio had stopped for a moment as their eyes adjusted to the sunlight.

Lou leaned against the church doors and removed her shoes. ‘Ooh.’ She sighed with relief.

‘I can’t see her?’ Jane said, standing on her tippy toes.

‘There’s no sign of her,’ said Clare, shading her eyes with her floral arrangement, ‘even in all that white you think she’d be easy to spot.’

‘I told ya that Darren was no good for Dee,’ Lou said, gripping her shoes like a hammer. ‘I’m so glad she didn’t marry the wanker.’

‘Dee almost did. There’s the limo, she might be inside.’ Jane scampered towards the driver leaning against the parked limousine, followed by the click-clack of Clare’s heels and the slap of Lou’s bare feet. ‘Excuse me,’ Jane asked the driver, ‘have you seen the bride?’

‘She took off through the park.’ He pointed to the public gardens where groups had gathered to enjoy the mild autumn weather.

‘Jane?’ called out Petey. He jumped the church steps, tailed by his best mates, Jimmy and Chris.

‘Petey, Dee’s runoff into the park.’ Jane latched onto her husband’s large hand and they scanned the area, hopeful of spotting the absconded wife-that-never-was.

Reg jogged towards them, undoing his shirt’s top button, loosening his tie, and inhaled deeply to catch his breath. ‘If Dee hadn’t punched the prick, I was gonna. And Jane,’ Reg said, patting the small woman’s shoulder, ‘who knew you had it in you?’

‘I hope Darren’s damaged for life for what he’d done to Dee. I told ya—’

‘Let’s not worry about that now, Lou,’ said Jane, blowing at another fugitive blonde curl. ‘We need to find Dee.’

‘Dee’s got no money. No phone. Nothing. Where could she go?’ Clare searched, towering over everyone’s heads, gnawing the gloss off her lower lip.

‘I’d bet my sister’s halfway across the park by now,’ said Jimmy. ‘I’m gonna kill Darren and our cousin for this. I’ll take what’s left after Nan’s finished choking Katrina in the church where the priest’s goin’ that red, I swear he’s gonna have a heart attack any second.’ Jimmy raked fingers through messy auburn hair, standing beside his dad, Reg.

Both men shared the same build and concerned creased brow.

‘You’re wearing a dress, Lou,’ Chris said, The skinny Anglo-Indian, grinned and nodded almost leaning his head on Lou’s broad bare shoulder. ‘You look nice, Lou. Didn’t know you owned a dress. You’re beeeeeeautiful.’

‘You look like a girl, Lou. How much did Dee pay you to wear that dress?’ Jimmy asked, stepping out of swinging distance from Lou’s shoes, she’d gripped like lethal weapons.

Clare waved her bouquet like a wand. ‘Focus peoples. We have a runaway bride to find.’

‘You’re right,’ said Jimmy, yanking at the top button and tie of his groomsman suit. ‘Chris, Petey, grab a bridesmaid each and we’ll do a bridal-sweep in our vehicles. Call me if you track down Dee, and we’ll meet back home. Dad, you’re with me.’

Reg straightened his glasses and surveyed the street. ‘I don’t want my daughter out in the city alone. Not in her state.’

‘We’ll find her, Dad.’ They separated into teams and the hunt for the runaway bride began...

Was the Editor right in leaving the above chapter out of the story?

find out by reading the rest of the story to compare.



THE EXTRA LINKS

THE FUN STUFF!!

Click on the blogs titles to find out more on this story. FYI, all of these are done in good humour, so don't let the tragic titles fool you... or is this really a self-help book?

SHOWER SONG!

BREAKUP BLUES

BREAKUP BUDDIES

HARDWARE LOVE AFFAIRS

ROMANCING THE DATING SYNDROMES

THE MYTH OF THE MANCAVE...

BOYS & BEDROOMS



[GOODREADS](#)

awaits your amazing review

[AMAZON](#)

to make your point there too

[BOOKBUB](#)

to add to the fanfare

Just a word from me! **Your book reviews are priceless!** Yeah, I mean that. So if you have read this book, or any of my other stories, I'd love to read them. And if you have, THANK YOU, for doing so. Xx

AND, WE'RE STILL ON THE FUN STUFF!!

It's hard to say what my favourite quote is, as there are so many.

As for **favourite characters**:

- I do have a soft spot for LOU, the Body-building BFF.
- I adore Jimmy the big-bro with a soft heart.



And there's Nan, the matriarch of the family. Nan has a scene in this story, I argued with the editor to keep! I'm so glad I did. It's the most popular chapter readers loved. I'm sure you'll enjoy it too—let me know if you do!

STILL ON THE FUN STUFF!!

Here are some more links for you to explore.
Go on, you've made it this far...

[AVOIDING THE PITY PARTY'S PLAYLIST](#)

[AVOIDING THE PITY PARTY'S PINTEREST PAGE](#)

& FOR THOSE BEAUTIFUL BOOKBLOGGERS:

[AVOIDING THE PITY PARTY'S PRESS RELEASE](#)



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KOBO	GOOGLE	SMASHWORDS



aaaand that's a wrap!

Phew! You made it.
That a deserves a high five.

Stay in touch on the socials [@MelARowe](#)
& keep me posted on your reading journey!
I can't wait to read your review on this
story, because *Your words* do matter to me.

until next time

HAPPY READING

mel
A. ROWE
bestselling author