

Mazel Tov to Love:  
Kyle's First Seder

by Corey Podell and Jamie Silberhartz

Kyle felt a rush of excitement as she drove her Jeep Wrangler through Bel Air's hilly streets into downtown Beverly Hills. Usually she would be coming to this section of town to shop till she dropped with her friends or sisters, but today was different.

Today was the first day of Passover and she was making a traditional Seder meal for her new boyfriend, Mauricio. She was headed to Nate 'n Al's deli to pick up brisket, matzo, horseradish, and all the other supplies she would need.

She thought about Mauricio as she pulled up next to a Mustang at a light. They had only been dating for about a year, but she knew he was the one. Her daughter Farrah adored him, her ex-husband liked him, her sisters approved of him, and she—well she LOVED him.

The Mustang honked, breaking her out of her Mauricio spell. She glanced over—it was Jason Priestly giving her a wave. She waved back and blew him a kiss before he made a right turn. Jason was a sweetie. They'd gone out a couple of times, but were better as friends. That was another great thing about Mauricio Umansky—he was secure enough that her guy friends weren't an issue.

Kyle accelerated down the hill, blaring her favorite Wilson Phillips song as it came on the radio. Life was good, and was only going to get better. Tonight she was going to show Mauricio that she was wife material.

Mauricio came from a traditional Jewish family, and she knew that marrying someone Jewish was important to him. She had grown up with a ton of Jewish friends and had even been to some Seders in her time, but this was of course the most important one. She was intrigued by Judaism, and had even

started thinking about conversion. She hadn't even shared that with Mauricio yet. The only person she told was her best friend Faye, who could not have been more supportive.

Kyle strut into the deli, shopping list in hand. It was packed, loud, and warm. People were wishing each other a good Pesach left and right, and she had to admit, she felt at home.

When it was finally her turn to order, she flashed a grin and started rattling off her list, but was interrupted by the deli worker, "What name is the order under?"

"Huh?!" an impatient woman behind her exclaimed. "You didn't place an order? You have to do that weeks ahead of time!"

Kyle had no idea. The woman continued, "You should see if Ralph's has anything left."

Her cheeks flushed bright red as she made her way back to the valet. How could she be so stupid? She used her newly installed car phone to call Faye, but it went to her answering machine. Damn it Faye! Always at aerobics!

Kyle rushed through Ralph's aisles like she was on Supermarket Sweep. She was way behind schedule now. She threw store brand (ugh!) matzo meal, salad supplies, and wine into her cart before approaching the butcher.

She asked for brisket, to which he replied, "What's the name on the order?"

What?! You had to order ahead of time for Passover even at Ralph's, the Olive Garden of grocery stores?

She looked pleadingly and asked if there was anything he could do. "I have a good turkey I can give you."

A turkey? A turkey?! This was a disaster, but it would have to do. Maybe Mauricio wouldn't even notice?

It was her ex's weekend with Farrah, so she had the house to herself to cook, clean, and set the perfect table. She unloaded her groceries and got to the business of cooking for her man.

Ever so efficient, Kyle worked like only a woman who wants to lock it down could: While her eggs boiled, she set the table; while the oven preheated, she placed the Haggadot (borrowed from Faye) at their seats; while the turkey cooked, she arranged the Seder plate. Maror...check! Charoset...check! Karpas...check! Egg...check! Shank bone...shit!

She forgot the shank bone in this morning's rush. She looked around. What could she use as a substitute? She heard that some people use chicken bones, but she didn't keep anything like that in her house. She'd been on her fat-free diet for a couple months now, and chicken wings were definitely not fat-free. But fat-free was going out the window tonight. And apparently so were the many Passover traditions she had researched and planned!

She called her sister Kim to see if she had anything that could substitute for a shank bone. Kim said she did and would be right over. Thank God for sisters!

Kyle looked at the clock. She only had two hours before Mauricio arrived, and she still hadn't washed or styled her bangs, changed, or called Farrah to say hello. If this is what Judaism entailed, maybe she wasn't up to the task after all?

Kyle took a quick shower while the side dishes simmered on low heat and brought her blow dryer into the breakfast nook so she could keep an eye on things while making herself look presentable.

With only half of her head dry, she heard Kim and her girls barrel through the front door—they never knocked, and that was fine with her. Kyle's nieces were on their way to gymnastics and decked out in their leotards. They ran up and gave her huge hugs that made her shower towel almost fall off.

"Wow! It smells great in here!" Kim was always so positive. She pulled something out of her mini-backpack. "A bone for my favorite little sis!"

Kyle examined the bone as Brooke and Whitney practiced their handstands against her kitchen island. It wasn't a chicken bone, and it damn sure didn't look like a traditional lamb shank.

Kim answered her question before she even asked. "It's Teddy's! You're welcome! Teddy was Kim's German Shepherd.

"You brought me a dog bone?"

"You said you needed a bone! Plus, Teddy never even touched it. Gotta run to gymnastics, come on girls!"

And just like that, the tornado of Kim blew out of the house. She placed the enormous bone on the Seder plate; it looked ridiculous. How much worse could this night get?

After putting the finishing touches on her hair and makeup and surveying the kitchen, Kyle took a deep breath. OK, so it wasn't perfect, but she was proud of herself as she took in what she'd made. The potato gratin, green beans, and roasted veggies were ready—just needed to be warmed—and the soup was simmering. Best of all, her matzo balls were holding together nicely. She poured the kosher wine into a glass and took a sip; she deserved it.

She called Farrah and told her she loved her, then bounded

upstairs to put on the perfect outfit: a baby doll dress from Delia's over maroon tights, her new black choker, Mary Jane heels, and a black jacket. She looked into her full-length mirror—she looked cool but sophisticated.

Just then the phone rang, and she raced downstairs to answer it. She heard Mauricio's deep voice over the line saying he was about to leave work, and did she need him to pick up anything.

"Nope! I got it," she replied in the most perfect "I'm-wifey-material" voice.

She was grateful he took off a bit early to come over today. Usually he worked nonstop—his ambition was part of the reason she loved him. He was an entrepreneur, having just opened his clothing company 90265. She loved the clothes they made, and not just because she was dating the CEO!

That gave her an idea. She turned the stove burner off and raced back upstairs to her closet. She took off the jacket (it was 85 degrees today anyway!) and dug through her drawers for the T-shirt Mauricio gave her from his last sample sale. It was an extra extra small (just her size), and it was so sweet that he thought to put it aside for her before it could get snatched up. She pulled the T-shirt over her baby doll dress and tied it in a knot at her navel. He would love it!