

ENJOY THIS  
EXCERPT OF





It all started innocently enough. I was mom-drunk, a unique form of inebriation exacerbated by the giddiness of being out for a night without your children. Like imbibing on medication or at high altitudes, it makes each cocktail feel like four.

Two of my best friends, Laura and Rebecca, were with me, also mom-drunk. Surrounded by contemporary art and sipping expensive rose lychee martinis, we had come a long way from the warm kegs of our college nights together. The Coral Room at the Bloomsbury Hotel in London, where we were currently basing ourselves, was needlessly hip, a place where, you could tell, some of the best and worst decisions of people's lives were made. Tiered art deco chandeliers hung from the ceiling as people perched on plush pink banquettes at a gold-rimmed bar. The whole lounge smelled like jasmine and gin. We had a high table in the corner and our drinks and faces were reflected back at us in the mirrored glass surface.

My children were just across the river; Rebecca's kids were across the ocean. She had flown over from New York at the instigation of our friend Laura, who was on the English leg of her yearlong trip around



the world. She and her husband had recently quit their high-profile jobs in Silicon Valley to travel with their six-month-old baby. They took pasta-making classes in Rome and pushed their stroller down the path by the Seine in Paris. They stayed in a Moroccan riad and made friends with a local rug seller from the market, who offered them a steep discount. Traveling with a baby had its challenges—the number of stomach bugs alone was enough to put you off—but for Laura, it was a life-changing experience.

“I’m just in awe,” I told Laura, trying not to slur my words as I signaled to the bartender for another round of drinks. “I mean, you did it. You gave up everything and you’re living the dream.”

“Aren’t you?” she countered.

Things did look that way. I was living in a house on a beautiful Georgian square in central London, a place that I had dreamed of living since the day I heard the first chords of “Wannabe” by the Spice Girls. I had an adoring husband, my sweetheart since we were twenty-two; a set of rambunctious and hilarious eight-year-old twins; and a French bulldog with a face made for Instagram.



After years of working for other people, I had spent the last several as CEO of the social-impact company my husband and I cofounded. My job was rich with freedom and purpose. As the boss, I made my own schedule, often working from home and setting the corporate dress code as “business athleisure,” and worked with incredible nonprofits, companies, and foundations around the world on how to do more good. I had everything I had ever wanted, or so I thought.

“I guess,” I replied with a sigh.

“Well, what’s your dream then?” Rebecca asked.

I didn’t need to think about the answer—never had: “To be on Broadway, of course.” They smiled knowingly. My love of musical theater was well known to both of them. We had spent four years in college showering in close proximity and they had heard me belt out “Don’t Cry for Me Argentina” more times than I’m sure they’d care to remember.

“OK, OK, for real, I think it’s probably too late for my performing career,” I said, feeling just the tiniest sting of disappointment at the



truth of that statement. “But—I did have this weird idea. What if I could work backstage?”

I continued in detail. Even if I knew absolutely nothing about the process that goes into creating a production, I could, for example, fold thousands of pre-performance Playbills or polish actors’ tap shoes or even scrape gum off the bottom of the seats. I would do anything, really; I didn’t care what. I just wanted to be a part of it.

Laura and Rebecca mulled it over as our martinis arrived at the table but both concurred: It would be awesome. “Like if you became an intern.”

“Right,” I said. “An intern. At practically forty.”