

BUNDLE OF JOY

By Rachel Loveday

Joanna felt the warm sun on her skin as she sat by the pool-in her black bikini that showed off “the good bits” of her body perfectly with her long brown hair relaxed on her back and her sunnies over her eyes. She had never felt such bliss, so calm, so relaxed and there was no one else by the pool so it was quiet, it was just the way she liked it. She took a deep breath wondering why she didn’t go to a resort more often. Just as she felt her body calm down she heard screeching, no it was crying.

The cry of her five-week-old baby girl; Erica brought her back to reality-a cold winter night in maternity pyjamas that were once a comfortable fit, are now too big, with sore breasts and knotty hair. As Joanna walked into the next room and gently picked Erica up out of her cot, she wondered who it was exactly that said that motherhood is a joy, because it isn’t right now.

She held her baby in her arms and attempted to gently rock her to sleep, but to no avail, she just keep screeching-why can’t she just sleep a whole night? She then thought maybe rocking and singing would help—it did four hours ago, but it wasn’t now.

It didn’t help that her neighbour started pounding on her front door. She walked slowly to the door, hoping to avoid it, Mr Klansky doesn’t have any kids, he doesn’t understand. But it wasn’t Mr Klansky-it was Kim Harrison from 4G who was holding a mobile in her right hand.

“It’s musical. The rhythm would put my Bianca out like a light. And it’s clip on, I can put it on for you now.”

“Come on in.”

Bianca is now four years old, I never heard a peep out of her apartment when she was born and Kim managed to keep her trim figure, Joanna couldn’t help but feel a little jealous as she glided into Erica’s room.

“You know, some babies take a little longer to get into a regular sleep pattern than others and some women also find it difficult to breastfeed during the first few weeks-that doesn’t make you a failure, or a bad mother.”

“Yeah?”

“Yeah. I mean Bianca was easy but Mitchell was harder.”

“Mitchell? I didn’t know you had another child.”

“Yes—he lives with his Dad in Sydney, being a teenager all he wants to do is sleep but he was shocking when he was a baby—the first time he slept a full night was when he was 4 months old—it was a nightmare.”

“How did you get through it?”

“Well, I didn’t let anyone help me at first, I thought I had to deal with it by myself, but Mrs Figg in 7J gave me the number of a support group for mothers, they still meet every Friday at the community centre.”

Kim took a small business card out of her pocket with her left hand and finished clipping on the mobile on the cot with her right. With a simple turn of the handle, soft music-box like music played. Joanna gently placed Erica down; it only took her ten minutes to fall asleep. Kim gave Erica a kiss on the forehead and then gave Joanna a kiss on the cheek, handing her the business card.

“I’ll go with you, if you want me too.”

She glided out of the apartment and quietly shut the door. Joanna tip-toed back into her own room and lied down on the bed, hoping to feel the warm sun on her skin again.