

New Year's Resolutions

4:58 a.m.

'There you are,' Gary says. 'What are you doing up at this hour?'

Abi decreases the speed and sets her book, open-pages down, on the treadmill's monitor. 'What does it look like?'

'Working out some anger issues?'

'I'm 23,000 steps short of hitting my goal of five million steps for the year. And I've got one last book to read to reach 24. It's called multi-tasking. You should try it sometime.'

'I'm going back to bed.'

9:26 a.m.

'I'm off to run a couple of errands!'

'It's New Year's Eve, babe,' Gary says, looking up from his newspaper. 'Nothing'll be open.'

'I can still return the library books in the dropbox and leave these bags at the charity collection site behind Tesco. It's all part of my plan to declutter and remove 365 unused items from our home this year. I've got the last 26 in here. Your Lee Child books were just gathering dust.'

'Oh, alright.'

'I'm also going to pop by Sharon's.'

'Johnson?'

Abi nods.

'But, you haven't seen her in years.'

'I'm reconnecting with old friends.'

1:27 p.m.

'Have you got anything that needs ironing?' Abi asks.

Gary takes his eyes off the telly. 'Let me guess. Empty ironing basket?'

'Bingo! Who wants to start a new year with unfinished chores?'

'Can I help?'

'No, no. You just sit there and enjoy your programme. My resolutions, my burden.'

4:15 p.m.

'Do I dare ask?'

'You know all those delicious meals I've cooked for you this past year? Well, you can thank Nigella,' Abi says. She moves a steaming pot off the cooker, then turns on the oven. 'I vowed to try every recipe in Cook, Eat, and Repeat, but I've fallen a little behind.'

'So you're just cooking random recipes from her book, are you?'

'Two starters, a main, and three puddings. We'll eat like royalty tonight.'

'You know, there's no crime in not fulfilling every New Year's Resolution.'

'But I want to.'

'I get that, but there's no point killing yourself in the process. Just take it easy.'

8:20 p.m.

'This looks amazing,' Gary says, admiring the wall of framed photos.

'I've been putting this off for ages. Now that I've done it, I'm so glad I did. Photos look so much nicer in frames, don't you think?'

'They sure do. Great work, babe.'

11:43 p.m.

'It's nice to see you finally relaxing. I take it you've knocked everything off of your list?'

'Not quite. There's still one thing. But as you said, there's no point killing myself trying to get through everything.'

'What have you got left to do then?'

Abi lets out a sigh. 'Engage in amorous congress 52 times. We've done it 51 times. I reckon that's close enough.'

Gary smiles and raises an eyebrow. 'There's still time. If you want, we could'

'No, Gary,' Abi says, checking her Fitbit. 'It's nearly midnight.'

'I only need five minutes.'