

# Ana is in emotional turmoil following her self-imposed split with Christian in the opening chapter of **E L James'** steamy sequel to **Fifty Shades of Grey**

image: <https://www.penguin.co.uk/content/dam/prh-consumer/penguin/misc/divider-3cm.png>

---

I have survived Day Three Post-Christian, and my first day at work. It has been a welcome distraction. The time has flown by in a haze of new faces, work to do, and Mr. Jack Hyde. Mr Jack Hyde . . . he smiles down at me, his blue eyes twinkling, as he leans against my desk.

“Excellent work, Ana. I think we’re going to make a great team.”

Somehow, I manage to curl my lips upward in a semblance of a smile.

“I’ll be off, if that’s okay with you,” I murmur.

“Of course, it’s five thirty. I’ll see you tomorrow.”

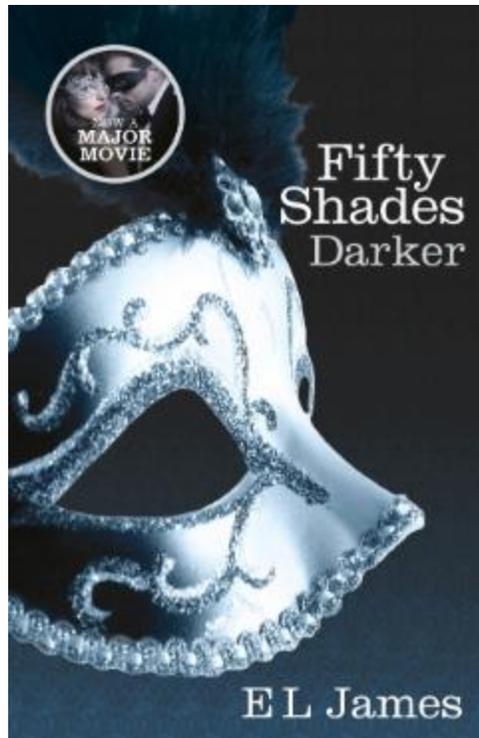
“Good night, Jack.”

“Good night, Ana.”

Collecting my bag, I shrug on my jacket and head for the door. Out in the early evening air of Seattle, I take a deep breath. It doesn’t begin to fill the void in my chest, a void that’s been present since Saturday morning, a painful hollow reminder of my loss. I walk toward the bus stop with my head down, staring at my feet and contemplating being without my beloved Wanda, my old Beetle . . . or the Audi.

image:

<https://www.penguin.co.uk/content/dam/catalogue/pim/editions/501/9780099579922/cover.jpg.rendition.242.374.png>



I shut the door on that thought immediately. No. Don't think about him. Of course, I can afford a car— a nice, new car. I suspect he has been overgenerous in his payment, and the thought leaves a bitter taste in my mouth, but I dismiss it and try to keep my mind as numb and as blank as possible. I can't think about him. I don't want to start crying again— not out on the street.

The apartment is empty. I miss Kate, and I imagine her lying on a beach in Barbados sipping a cool cocktail. I turn on the flatscreen television so there's noise to fill the vacuum and provide some semblance of company, but I don't listen or watch. I sit and stare blankly at the brick wall. I am numb. I feel nothing but the pain. How long must I endure this?

The door buzzer startles me from my anguish, and my heart skips a beat. Who could that be? I press the intercom.

"Delivery for Ms. Steele." A bored, disembodied voice answers, and disappointment crashes through me. I listlessly make my way downstairs and find a young man noisily chewing gum, holding a large cardboard box, and leaning against the front door. I sign for the package and take it upstairs. The box is huge and surprisingly light. Inside are two dozen long- stemmed, white roses and a card.

Congratulations on your first day at work.  
I hope it went well.  
And thank you for the glider.  
That was very thoughtful.  
It has pride of place on my desk.  
Christian

image: <https://www.penguin.co.uk/content/dam/prh-consumer/penguin/misc/divider-3cm.png>

---

image: <https://www.penguin.co.uk/content/dam/prh-consumer/penguin/promos/promo-images/Snippet%20stock%20images/quotation.jpg>



And so a pattern develops: wake, work, cry, sleep. Well, try to sleep. I can't even escape him in my dreams. Gray burning eyes, his lost look, his hair burnished and bright all haunt me.

image: <https://www.penguin.co.uk/content/dam/prh-consumer/penguin/misc/divider-3cm.png>

---

I stare at the typed card, the hollow in my chest expanding. No doubt, his assistant sent this. Christian probably had very little to do with it. It's too painful to think about. I examine the roses—they are beautiful, and I can't bring myself to throw them in the trash. Dutifully, I make my way into the kitchen to hunt down a vase.

And so a pattern develops: wake, work, cry, sleep. Well, try to sleep. I can't even escape him in my dreams. Gray burning eyes, his lost look, his hair burnished and bright all haunt me. And the music . . . so much music—I cannot bear to hear any music. I am careful to avoid it at all costs. Even the jingles in commercials make me shudder. I have spoken to no one, not even my mother or Ray. I don't have the capacity for idle talk now. No, I want none of it. I have become my own island state. A ravaged, war-torn land where nothing grows and the horizons are bleak. Yes, that's me. I can interact impersonally at work, but that's it. If I talk to Mom, I know I will break even further—and I have nothing left to break.

I am finding it difficult to eat. By lunchtime on Wednesday, I manage a cup of yogurt, and it's the first thing I've eaten since Friday. I am surviving on a newfound tolerance for lattes and Diet Coke. It's the caffeine that keeps me going, but it's making me anxious.

Jack has started to hover over me, irritating me, asking me personal questions. What does he want? I'm polite, but I need to keep him at arm's length.

I sit and begin trawling through a pile of correspondence addressed to him, and I'm pleased with the distraction of menial work. My e-mail pings, and I quickly check to see who it's from.

Holy shit. An e-mail from Christian.

Oh no, not here . . . not at work.

From: Christian Grey

Subject: Tomorrow

Date: June 8 2011 14:05

To: Anastasia Steele

Dear Anastasia

Forgive this intrusion at work. I hope that it's going well. Did you get my flowers? I note that tomorrow is the gallery opening for your friend's show, and I'm sure you've not had time to purchase a car, and it's a long drive. I would be more than happy to take you— should you wish.

Let me know.

Christian Grey  
CEO, Grey Enterprises Holdings, Inc.

Read more at <https://www.penguin.co.uk/articles/find-your-next-read/extracts/2016/jan/fifty-shades-darker-by-el-james/#Bbe2w2McyDDFzcme.99>