

BY AMY LANE

Renewal

Ally's squeal of dismay brought her Uncle Kyle running to the laundry room, where his sister was pulling clothes out of the drier.

"Oh no! Uncle Kyle look!"

She'd started to cry, so Kyle picked her up and soothed her, looking at his sister Elizabeth for clarification.

"Oh, Kyle—darn it! Look at it now!"

Kyle couldn't suppress a groan. "Oh no—well it'll hardly fit now, will it?" "I'm sorry!" Ally wailed, and Kyle soothed her some more.

"It's not your fault, sweetling," he said. "It just ended up in the drier, that's all."

"But it was my favorite jumper and Sadie got grape juice on it and I thought I would wash it and..."

Another storm of weeping followed, and both Kyle and Elizabeth looked heavenward.

"Oh!" he said, finally understanding. "Well, it was a logical thing to do, Poppet, but wool doesn't work that way in the washer and drier."

"But I love it," she sniffled. "It's pink and blue and I love it and now we have to give it away." She sniffled some more and Kyle reached for the shrunken jumper from his sister.

"Well now, I don't know who we'd give it to," he said thoughtfully. "It would only fit the tiniest of babies, and it's too thick to be comfortable." He gazed at it some more. "But you know, maybe we can just fix it up a little. It's still pretty, right?"

Ally looked it over critically. "All the flowers and the design are still there," she said, taking a shuddery breath and tracing them with her finger. "And it's so soft!" "It's felted now," Kyle told her. He actually liked the process—when it was done on purpose. "You know what? Do you mind if I play with it a little bit? I think I can make something really wonderful with this, and you can still have the pretty

flowers and the soft yarn. What do you think?"

"If you can fix it so I can still touch it and see it and use it, Uncle Kyle, it'll be magic," she said soberly, and he grinned at her.

"Yarn magic—it's a true thing." He set her down. "Now let me take this to my flat, and your Uncle Cliff and I will have some ideas, yes?"

She kissed his cheek as he put her down. "I can't wait to see what you do with your magic."

"Neither can I," said Elizabeth as Ally scampered off. "Seriously, Kyle—what are you going to do with it? It will certainly never fit again."

Kyle grinned at her. "Have faith, Elizabeth. Haven't you heard? My yarn and I are magic!"

A few hours later, Cliff was looking at him dubiously. "We're going to what?" he asked, eyes wide as he took in Kyle's rotary cutter, the cutting mat and the clear plastic ruler used to make every cut precise. Kyle outlined what they were going to do to repurpose one very thick, very small pink and blue sweater, and Cliff swallowed. "Okay, love—that's fine. As long as you're the one to cut it up."

Kyle laughed nervously—he'd borrowed the equipment from his sister, and he had no pattern for this, only hope. "Okay," he muttered, on his knees in their kitchen, squaring up the bottom of the jumper for the first cut. "Here goes."

"Uncle Kyle! Uncle Cliff, I love it!"

Ally squealed, and Kyle and Cliff exchanged relieved looks. "All of this is from my jumper?"

Kyle nodded and picked up the purse he'd made with the body of the sweater. "It is indeed," he said. "I cut this out, and Uncle Cliff sewed it together and made the little polymer



clay decorations, which was a tricky bit of business. And then he used many lengths of the same coloured wool to plait the strap."

"It's so pretty!" Ally breathed. "I especially love the tassels!"

"So glad you like it, Ally," Cliff said shyly. He loved his fiancé's family, and had worked especially hard because Ally had been his biggest champion since the day he and Kyle had moved in together.

"And look what I made here," Kyle said. "Cliff made some more little buttons and sewed them to another bit of the jumper. Do you see?" "A bangle!" Ally squealed. "Help me put it on!" Her mother helped her to clip it on, and she ran to the bathroom to see how it looked.

"Oh, you boys outdid yourself," Elizabeth said on a note of relief. "She was so upset about that jumper—you really did pull some magic out of your hats, didn't you?" Cliff met Kyle's eyes and they both nodded.

"But you know this isn't the end," Cliff said grimly.

"Oh yes, I know," Kyle agreed.

"Sorry, loves," Elizabeth sighed, listening to Ally babble at her father about her new bangle and matching purse. "You two are going to have to knit another sweater." 