

CHAPTER ONE

The Idea

Cecilia

I took a bite of my bagel, spread with butter and honey, and looked up at Will. He sat across the table from me, smiling like he had a surprise. We had been together for over a year now and he continued to amaze me. Life with him never got stale - at least not yet.

"What?" I said.

"Nothing," he said, smiling even wider down into his breakfast. He had granola with yogurt and fruit. It looked good, and I suddenly wished that I had chosen that instead.

"Hm." I didn't say anything else. It bugged me more than I cared to admit when he kept things from me - even good things, as this appeared to be. But I ignored the feeling for now. I knew the drill. I just narrowed my eyes at him and waited. I knew that when he looked like that, it wouldn't take long before he would *have* to tell me.

Instead I focused on him. He was looking damn good sitting there in his boxers and an undershirt, his brown hair still wet

and curling a little from the shower. He had some kind of meeting today and wanted to eat before he put his suit on. I tamped down my arousal. For goodness sake, we had been together a year now. *You don't have to be doing it 24/7, Cecilia*, I scolded myself. Even so, I wanted him. I ignored my desire and continued to eat my bagel.

It took less than a minute for him to cave.

"Okay, okay. I just had a really great idea - or I think it is - and I want to know what you think about it."

"Okay," I said.

"What if we went on a trip together? I was just picturing us in a cozy little cabin, with a bear skin rug in front of the fireplace. And a fire in the hearth. And we were..." He waggled his eyebrows up and down suggestively.

I smiled and couldn't help a shiver at the thought. His grin grew.

"So you like the idea, then?"

"It sounds wonderful but how...?" He cut me off.

"I don't know, but I bet we can figure something out. Obviously, we can take time off whenever we think it makes sense. Why don't you talk to Rose when you go in today?"

"I could do that." The idea was really starting to grow on me. Will and I, all by ourselves, in a little cabin in the woods. We could ski, snowshoe, go for long walks, and sit - or do other things - in front of the fire. It sounded like a dream.

In the year since we had gotten together, both of us had been working insane hours to make extra money. We had decided to

buy a house and were saving up for the down payment. Sometimes we were lucky to take one day off - never mind a week.

"For how long were you thinking and when?" I said.

"I don't know? Two weeks - that'd be including travel? What do you think?"

"Yeah, that sounds about right. But when?"

"As soon as we can? You have that big promotion coming up in a few weeks and my new album will be ready to release soon after that. We'll be crazy busy afterwards, so I think we should try and make this happen in the next couple weeks."

"Okay, well, let's do it then. I'll talk to Rose."

"And I'll look into booking something. I think this is going to be great Celia," he said, giving me a kiss on the cheek and continuing to eat his breakfast with gusto. His excitement was catching and I felt happiness and anticipation rise up inside me. A week with Will - the thought still made me as giddy as the schoolgirl I'd been when I had first met him.

The two of us - alone - for fourteen whole days. No work. No employees calling us. No interruptions.

It sounded like heaven.

Will

Celia waved to me as she ran over to the car. I was picking her up from work at Cecilia's - the restaurant she owned - on the way home from my meeting. As, Celia hopped in the car, I pulled

on the knot of my tie and loosened it until it stopped choking me. She kissed me on the cheek.

"Rose was all for it, Will." She gave me an excited smile. "She said that it was fine and that she hoped we would have a great time. She's so awesome."

"Okay, that's perfect. I'll start looking online for something as soon as we get home."

I noticed the disappointed look in her eyes, though she didn't say anything. Well, it had been a week or so since we'd made love and it seemed my sweet Cecilia couldn't get enough of me. This thought warmed me up inside and I amended my statement.

"I mean, I'll start looking as soon as we're done."

"Done what?" she said, her lips beginning to curve up.

"You know what," I said, winking at her and saw the blush stain her cheeks out of the corner of my eye as I turned into our neighbourhood.

Later on that evening, Cecilia was curled up next to me on the couch, reading a book while I worked on the lyrics to a new song I was writing. The dishes were done and the kitchen tidied. I liked to keep things tidy which was a good thing since Cecilia didn't much care. I did the cleaning and she did most of the cooking and it worked out well. Cecilia yawned and closed her book.

"I'm going to go to bed." She grabbed her phone and checked it. "Oh my God, Will. Rose just texted me that her cousin has a cabin that they rent out during the off season - because they use

it during the summer, you know. She gave me a number to call - I'll send it." She tapped a few times on her phone and I heard mine buzz.

"Celia, that's awesome. Is it too late to call?"

"Nah, you should be good. I'm tired. I'll see you in the morning," she said, kissing me on the lips. Then she kissed me again. Pretty soon, we were heating up and I pulled away, breathless. She pouted, then grinned.

"Cecilia."

"Did I get you all wound up? I'm sorry," she really did look contrite, though I wasn't sure she regretted it.

"One orgasm a day isn't good enough for you, you minx?" I pounced on her and began to tickle her.

"Will!" she shrieked. "Stop! Stop!"

I stopped. Cecilia got her breath back and then looked at me with a soft light in her eyes.

"I love you, Will." She leaned in and rested her forehead on mine.

"Love you too, babe," I said softly.

I watched her pad her way to the bathroom to get ready for bed. I sighed. I was too lucky. Sometimes I wondered if the bubble would burst and Celia would see me for who I really am - just a messed up foster kid.

Sometimes I would have dark periods - only two since Cecilia and I had gotten together but every time it happened I wondered if she wouldn't rather just ditch me for someone less screwed up. But no, she stayed by me, did what she could to help me through

the despair, and was right there with me when the sunshine came back.

Don't get me wrong, she had her moments too. And we'd had a few fights. Nothing we couldn't get over. Somehow, though, I kept waiting for the other shoe to drop. You know, like it was just too great. My life couldn't really be this perfect. But Cecilia was an incredible woman. I was more and more amazed with her every day. I ought to be grateful for my good fortune, not always looking for something bad to happen.

I couldn't help it, though. I'd never been this happy - ever. Except probably when I was baby, before my parents had destroyed my life by doing whatever they did to land me in the foster system. I guess maybe that's what this felt like - the calm before the storm.

Could Cecilia really love me that much? So much, she'd never leave no matter what? That's what I didn't know.

And it was eating me up inside.

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CHAPTER TWO

Travelling

Cecilia

We'd been driving for a few hours when I really started feeling uncomfortable. I was on the upswing of my monthly cycle and my libido was in overdrive. Will kept looking at me out of the corner of his eye as he drove down the darkened road. We were in the middle of nowhere and still about an hour out of the city where we were to catch our flight. I shifted in my seat again and tried to seem normal.

"Cecilia, what is wrong? Have you got ants in your pants or what?" Will finally broke down and asked me.

I didn't answer, not knowing what to say.

"Celia?"

"Well, I..."

How to tell him? It was so embarrassing. But, well, this was almost like a honeymoon, wasn't it?

"I'm just, well, I just feel like..."

He frowned at the road in confusion.

"You're starting to freak me out here, Celia. What the hell? Are you sick?"

"Oh, Jesus, you don't have to freak out just because I'm horny," I said. Then I blushed to the roots of my hair.

Couldn't I have found a more lady-like way to say it? Probably not. A few hours alone in a vehicle with him had me longing for him in a way that I'd never experienced before. Must be the concentration of pheromones in the car.

There was silence.

"I know, there must be a more polite way to say that," I said, breaking the quiet. I was a little worried that I'd put him off.

"No, no, that was fine. Just fine," he said his voice a bit rough. He stared out the window but his eyes seemed a little unfocused. *Great, now I was going to cause an accident because of my randy comment.*

"Will?"

"Um, were you suggesting we act on your..."

I drew a deep breath. God, I hoped so.

"Well, I don't know," I said. "How?"

"Nothing like making out in the car," he said.

"I don't want to hear how you know that." I told him.

"And I don't want to tell you," he said, grinning now.

"But you always see in those movies where the police officer comes and shines a flashlight in the window of a car that's parked on the side of the road. I definitely don't want that to happen."

"But the possibility that it might excites you, doesn't it?"

I sucked in my breath and felt a jolt go straight to my core.

He grinned even wider.

"Thought so. You can't fool me, Celia. What if I pulled off somewhere?"

"Okay," I said, butterflies in my stomach at the thought of what would happen then.

He watched the sides of the road for the next five minutes for someplace to pull off. Finally, he found a little road that didn't go anywhere but into a little copse of trees that would hide the car quite nicely. I still felt a little nervous but that just seemed to be stoking my desire even more. I'd never done anything like this. He turned in and parked the car.

We just sat there for a moment.

"Well?" he said.

"Where?"

"Backseat?"

"I guess it is the traditional spot," I said, blushing again. *This was Will, we'd done it twenty ways from Sunday at home. Why did I feel like a inexperienced girl again at the thought of doing it with him in the backseat of a car?*

"You sure you want to do this, Celia?" he said, picking up on my nervous vibe, I guess.

I leaned over the gear shift and grabbed his shirt, pulling him to me in a hot kiss that had my nipples hardening and my desire going into overdrive. After a couple minutes, he pulled back.

"Okay, then. You do. Let's do it then," he said, his voice harsh with lust.

I put my seat back and then climbed over it, while he hopped out and then got back in. I returned my seat to its original position. My breath was coming faster now, as he pulled me on top of him. I straddled his leg and pulled up his shirt getting my hands underneath. I needed to touch him - right now. His breath was hot in my ear which was sending shocks of electricity through me. Then he pressed a line of kisses along my neck to my shoulder making me moan.

There is something about that spot where the neck meets the shoulder that drives me crazy. I felt my panties get even more soaked and I knew I must be slippery and ready for him. I felt like I'd never wanted him this much, ever.

His hands began to explore under my shirt and he worked at my bra clasp for a minute until I got tired of his fumbling and reached back to undo it myself. When I released it, I felt my breasts drop, heavy, into his waiting hands and I groaned. He lifted my shirt to expose my soft mounds, squeezing the dusky tips which were already hard. I rubbed myself against his leg, like a cat and made a desperate noise.

"I love when you make that sound, Celia. It makes me so hard," he whispered in my ear, making me buck again. Then he nibbled my earlobe and tweaked my aroused peaks at the same time.

"Will," I said. "Please."

I felt him smile against my neck as his hands reached down and pulled my shirt off. I did the same to him and we were skin to skin. I closed my eyes in rapture. That felt so good. I ran my hands over his chest and back, stopping to rub his cute little

man-nipples until they were hard. His own hands were all over me. He flipped up the skirt I was wearing and slid into my panties.

"Jesus, Celia," he said. "You are so slick." And I could feel that I was. He slid his finger up and down my wetness, then focused in on my nub. Instantly I felt my orgasm begin to rise. I was panting now.

"Please, Will," I said again.

"Oh, don't worry, love. Don't worry," he said, shifting me so he could pull off my panties.

"Condom?" I said, unable to form complete sentences anymore.

"Don't worry," he said again. He lifted his butt off the seat so he could pull his pants down to his knees.

I grabbed a handful of him and smiled with delight at the feel of him, so hot and hard. I had to have him inside me.

"Now, Will, now."

"Patience, Celia," he said, settling the condom on his erection. When he got it on, I raised myself up so that I was poised over top of him. Then I allowed myself to drop and felt him pierce me. My eyes rolled back in my head it felt so amazing. He filled me and I settled myself until he was as deep inside as he could go - our hips pressing against each other. Then all thought was swept away as I was lost in sensation.

I stayed still for a minute, enjoying the feeling of him completing me.

"I don't know how people do this casually," I said softly and began to move over him.

I put my hands on the top of the backseat to steady myself. Then I began to lift and slowly impale myself on him over and over.

"Celia, you're killing me, woman," he said, his breath ragged.

I shifted to a rocking motion and gasped - that movement rubbed my clit and hit my g-spot every time. I picked up the pace and felt the wave start to build. I was covered in sweat in spite of the fact that the temperature was dropping in the car, since it was no longer running.

"I'm close, Celia," Will said in a strangled sort of voice, thrusting his hips up into me.

"Yes," I said as the feeling drew nearer. I was on the brink of the release I longed for. "Yes, yes, yes."

Then I climaxed with an internal explosion. I arched my back as my sex convulsed around Will's rock hard shaft that he was still pumping into me. Fireworks went off behind my closed eyes and I lost my breath. I continued to ride him.

'Yes, oh yes. Oh God," I cried out as the orgasm went on and on.

"Celia!" Will said as he tensed and grabbed my shoulders, crying out in pleasure. He rested his forehead on mine and only after he'd emptied himself completely did my own spasms stop.

"Holy fuck," he said softly.

I smiled into his shoulder where I'd collapsed in a puddle of satisfaction. He was right. There had been something holy

about it this time. I almost felt like I'd been transported to another plane of existence.

"I agree," I managed to croak out.

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CHAPTER THREE

Catching the Flight

Will

I looked at myself in the mirror and straightened my tie. My pants were still a little bit sideways. Was that a little lipstick at the corner of my mouth? I wiped it off and looked at myself again - decent. I left the bathroom and met Cecilia at our gate. She had straightened herself up as well. But her self-conscious smile and her heightened colour were a clear sign - to me anyway - of a woman who had been well shagged. Yes, I could please her and that pleased me. But enough of those sorts of thoughts. We had a plane to catch.

Just then a voice came over the loud speakers announcing that our flight was cancelled. Cecilia glanced over at me in consternation. I sat down beside her.

"Did you hear that? Our flight's been cancelled."

"I heard. What should we do now?"

"I don't know, but I'm going to go talk to them," she said with a determined look on her face. *Good, because I certainly wasn't.* I hated doing things like that. My default was still to blend into the background and not make any waves. If you didn't bother anyone, then they'd let you stay.

I shook my head a little to clear it. I was a man, now. If I needed to I could go and complain. I could. But I was glad I had Cecilia to do it instead. I watched her politely talking to the woman. I could tell she was being respectful but insistent. She walked back to me with a look of contentment on her face.

"They got us on another flight in three hours."

"That's great, Celia."

She held up two tickets.

"And they gave us a complimentary lunch at the airport restaurant, so come on."

Soon we were settled in a comfy booth by the window - with drinks and appetizers on their way. I looked around the restaurant and watched as a man carrying a tiny baby, with a woman beside him, entered and were seated at a table across the room. I frowned at the feelings a little scene like that brought up in me.

It always made me angry, that my parents hadn't loved me enough to take care of me and raise me. I had been in a lot of counselling, especially as a teenager and the counsellor had helped me understand that seemingly small things - like seeing this family - could trigger a massively out of proportion response in me, because of what I had gone through as a child. This fury was an example of that and I breathed deeply, trying to get myself under control.

I was so going to do better with my kids. My kids would be happy and content. I would love them and take care of them properly. I would..

"Will?" Cecilia was staring at me. She waved a hand in front of my face. "Earth to Will. Where are you?"

"Oh." I forced a laugh. "Nowhere. Just thinking."

"About what?" she said, a hint of concern in her eyes.

"Nothing. Nothing you need to worry about. I'm fine Cecilia," I said in response to her frown.

She pursed her lips together and I could see that she was upset. *What had I said? Just for her not to worry about me? Why would that make her angry?*

"Will." She took a deep breath. "Can I tell you something?"

"Sure, anything."

"Yes, that's it exactly. I can tell you anything, right?"

"Of course you can, Cecilia. I want you to be honest with me, always. I can take anything you can throw at me." I covered her hand with my own, looking into her eyes earnestly. *Was something wrong?*

"So, you want me to always be honest and share how I'm feeling, right?"

"Yes. That's what I just said." Somehow I felt that this was a trap of some sort but I couldn't quite figure out what exactly I was walking into.

"And how would you feel if I didn't? If I hid something from you because I wanted to protect you from my problems."

I felt my eyebrows draw together.

"Are you, Cecilia? Don't you trust me enough to tell me? I love you. I want to be there for you, through everything - not just the happy times - but all the times."

She sat back and nodded.

"I rest my case."

"What?" I was really confused now.

She leaned forward then with what I could see now was hurt in her eyes.

"How do you think I feel when you keep things from me? Because you don't think I can handle it. Because you want to protect me from your problems. *Because you don't trust me enough to let me see all of you.*"

She sat back, frowning. I sat there in mild shock as the implications of what she'd said began to sink in.

"Why won't you be honest with me and tell me when you're upset? Why won't you tell me what you were just thinking about? It's because you think there's stuff that you could throw at me that *would* make me run."

"No, Cecilia, I don't think that."

"Actions speak louder than words, William." She turned and looked off out the window, arms crossed over her chest.

She was right.

"I've been meaning to talk to you about this for a while but the time was never right. It drives me crazy when you keep part of yourself hidden and cut off from me. It's hurting our relationship, Will. Because there's always something between us. We can be happy but never connected at the deepest level, because you won't let me in."

She stopped speaking then and we sat in silence for a long time. I knew she was right. We'd been happy but there was something between us - my fear I guessed. I didn't know if I could do it, though. *Could I open up completely? Let her see my rage? Let her see me on my worst days? Could I let her see the*

darkest part of me? Surely not. She'd run screaming and never come back.

"I can't, Cecilia," I said. *How had our happy trip vibe become an argument already?*

"Why not?" She leaned forward, frustrated.

"Because if you saw the real me..." I said. "You'd leave and never come back."

"You really believe that." She was completely taken aback.

"I just..." I trailed off not knowing how to articulate the fear that always burned in the pit of my stomach.

She got a really stubborn look on her face. Then she took my hand.

"William, I swear to you that I am not going anywhere. There is nothing that you could ever do that would make me leave you. I know we're young and we haven't been together very long but I am committed. For always."

"What if I told you I'd killed someone?"

She flinched.

"Did you?"

"No, but what if I did?"

"I'd believe that you had a good reason for it."

"What if..."

"Will, stop. Prove to me that you trust me."

"Right now?"

"Yes. Right now. We can't move forward like this. We'll just be stuck here forever."

I swallowed and rubbed my thumb in circles on the hand that still held mine. *Prove it.*

"How?"

"Well, how about you start by telling me what you were thinking about just now. It couldn't be that bad, could it?"

I guess not.

"I was looking at that family that came in. The couple with the baby." She looked around trying to see where they were, like she hadn't even noticed them before. "And I... Well, I get triggered sometimes by small things and they make me really angry – not angry, furious. And when I see a family like that, it reminds me of what I never had. And it makes me so full of rage at my parents. Why couldn't they have loved me like that?" I said, asking Cecilia as if she would know.

"I don't know, Will," she said, compassion in her eyes, now. "I just don't know."

"Then I was thinking that when I have kids..."

Her mouth dropped open and I paused but she motioned for me to continue.

"Well, when we have kids? They're going to be loved and wanted and taken care of. I'm not ever going to let what happened to me happen to them."

"Of course not," she said.

"Well, that's all. That's all I was thinking." I dropped my eyes. "Is that enough proof for you, Cecilia?"

She nodded.

"And I'm still right here," she said. "Please tell me when that stuff comes up for you. Maybe if you look some of those old feelings in the eye, they'll stop having power over you. I can be here with you so it won't be so hard. Or it will be hard, but at least you won't have to go through it alone."

I nodded.

"Can you do that, Will? For me, please? Can you trust me?"

"Yeah, Celia. I can." I felt lighter, but there was still a voice deep inside of me that told me not to completely open up, that she'd only leave if I did.

And I didn't know how to tell the voice to shut up.

Several hours later, Cecilia had managed to get us a rental car. We'd had to go to four different companies but finally we were going to be on our way. And if all went well, we'd be at the cabin in about an hour, toasting our toes in front of a big fire. I smiled. *I couldn't wait.*

Cecilia was in the bathroom and I stared out the window at the clouds while I waited for her. They were big, thick, low-hanging clouds that looked like a storm waiting to happen. A few snowflakes drifted down but nothing serious. I checked the weather on my phone and it said that the snow was supposed to start in about four hours. There was a snowfall warning for then but right now everything seemed fine.

I checked the road report. It was all good too. The highway we were going to be on was reported as "good winter driving conditions" right now.

Weather, holding off. Check. Roads, cleared and ready for us. Check. Perfect vacation coming up. Check.

"Ready?" Cecilia said, grabbing my hand and grinning at me.

"Let's go," I said.

But as we headed out to the parking lot, I couldn't help a sense of unease as I glanced up at the clouds again. I shook it off. It was going to be fine. We had less than an hour's drive to the cabin. The snow wasn't supposed to start for another four hours. It was all good.

"Let our week together begin," Cecilia said as we got into the car.

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