

Chapter 2:

Wow Flan, he was just...Wow!

When Flan woke up she wandered up to find me. I jumped at the knock on my door, and then relaxed as she walked in; a worried look crossed her face as she rushed over to sit on the bed next to me.

“What's wrong?” she looked so concerned I couldn't help but smile.

“Nothing's wrong Flan, relax.”

“Why do you look so perplexed then?”

I laughed at her description of me and then blushed a little. “I met the most distracting man at the coffee shop today.”

“Distracting? Was he rude or something?”

“No, he was so polite, and Wow Flan, he was just...Wow! When we shook hands it was like the air was crackling with electricity!”

We looked at each other and laughed before, I looked down at the floor embarrassed.

“I've never felt that with anyone before and I just met him for all of 20 minutes tops!”

“Twenty minutes is enough for some people. You got his number right?” she asked like that had been the obvious thing to do.

My jaw dropped at the question as I went over the meeting in my head.

“Oh my God Flan! It never occurred to me to ask for his number. He probably thinks I'm totally uninterested, if not a bitch. I was so taken by surprise.”

“Did he say anything to suggest that he might want to see you again?”

I nodded, “He asked if he would see me again, and Jesus, Flan, I told him to look for my car!” I groaned in despair.

“Well nobody in this town is going to forget that car. I'm sure if he's interested enough he'll find you. Maybe you'll even run into him at the coffee shop again.”

“He probably thinks I'm a total ass and never wants to see me again. Looking like that he probably has a girlfriend, anyway.”

She smiled in a way that made me wonder if she knew something I didn't. “I guess time will tell.”

I knew this was not a good idea, but I was enchanted by this man I'd met and I just wanted to know more about him. There was no harm in getting to know a person, right?

“Why don't we wait until you're ready to go back, and see if he's there again? Have you ever seen him there before? Maybe he's a regular.” I thought for a moment but decided I couldn't have seen him there before, assuring her that he was too gorgeous to have missed.

“We'll go in a few days, just wait, you'll see.” I told her and she nodded with a curiously smug smile before standing up and leaving me to my thoughts again.

Flan called up the stairs at me two days later. “Saydie, are you almost ready?”

“Yeah I'm coming!” I yelled back as I came out of my room, purse in hand. It was grocery shopping day, which we really enjoyed doing together; it was almost as fun as having spa day. We had the time of our lives giggling like little girls as we came up with silly ideas for things to make with foods we didn't recognize, in the international aisles, at the market.

We got into Flan's immaculately detailed, forest green, 2001 Jetta. She stopped at a drive-thru coffee stand that she liked for mocha's, and we were on our way to the local market. It took forever to find a parking spot. We drove around in circles waiting for someone to come out, to leave, before we finally got lucky and someone pulled out close to the front of the store. We walked up to the doors, grabbed a cart for each of us, and headed for the first aisle which happened to be health and beauty.

“Do we need razors?” I asked her and she thought for a moment.

“I've been thinking about just making the switch from disposables and getting a real one.” she replied.

“Look at you big spender” I teased and she laughed.

“It's all the money I save living with you.” she replied and I laughed with her.

“Don't you use this one?” She asked holding up a blue ladies razor that vibrated.

I nodded, “Yeah, but I don't really like it that much, it's like the vibration is all in the handle. Isn't the vibrating part supposed to help with the shave? I don't see how that works if the blade doesn't vibrate with it.”

“Maybe you should try one like this,” a male voice spoke as someone handed a package with a men's razor in it, over my shoulder. It had four blades on one side of the head and an extra one on the other side for close trimming.

That voice sounds really familiar. I turned to see who it was and there he stood, golden eyed, beautiful and manly with a can of shaving gel in his hand.

“I think you'll like that one. The vibration is pretty even through the whole thing, and it gives you a really close shave.” My mind went blank almost immediately; it was Rhys Davis, the guy from the coffee shop.

I remembered to smile. “Thanks, I guess we'll try it out.” I said and set the package in my shopping cart.

“Glad I could help. Saydie isn't it?” I nodded and then remembered Flan.

“And this is my roommate Flannigan Emery.” She stepped forward with her hand outstretched to shake his.

“It's nice to meet you...” She trailed off not knowing his name.

“Rhys, Rhys Davis, nice to meet you as well Flannigan.” he said with a broad smile as he grasped her hand in his own.

“You can call me Flan.” she told him and he nodded.

“Flan it is then.”

I turned to her, “Rhys is the guy I told you I met at the coffee shop.” I watched as her eyes widened and she understood.

“Well it's nice to know that I was memorable enough to mention,” he said, still smiling as I blushed a little.

“I think you made quite an impression.” Flan teased him with a smile and I jabbed her in the ribs.

“Don't start Flan.” I told her and Rhys laughed although, he looked slightly embarrassed himself.

“Well, I'd better get going, so, Saydie it was nice seeing you again and Flan it was nice to meet you.” he nodded toward each of us and then walked off in the opposite direction.

“What are you doing, telling him that?” I hissed at her the second he was out of earshot.

“Hey, you obviously like him and there's no doubt that he's into you, I was just helping you out.”

“No helping Flan, there's no reason to get his hopes up about nothing,” I said firmly.

“You know it wouldn't hurt you to go out on a date or two, once in a while.”

“I don't date. Period.” I was in no mood for her to stick her nose in my personal life, even if she was right.

“Okay fine, but I'm not going to be your shoulder to cry on one day when you're old, gray, and have no one but your cats.” I threw my head back and laughed at her, knowing that would never happen.

“I promise you won't have to!” I said confidently, looking over just in time to see Rhys turn around and look in our direction one more time, from the end of the aisle. He gave a little wave and then disappeared.

Maybe she's right, it wouldn't hurt to get out a little, be a little more human. I thought. I realized that staying away from people was starting to wear on me more than I'd previously thought. No matter how hard I tried to fit in, there were still things that kept me from really feeling like I belonged.

I still kept my distance from everyone. It was a lonely way to live, not that I wasn't completely happy living with Flan, and having her as my friend. But I had this big, beautiful, house that I never invited anyone, but my parents to, and a huge pool out back that only two of us used. My life was still quite empty despite the one person I thought was filling it.

Maybe being friends with only Flan *wasn't* enough, maybe I did need to date some, and nothing said I had to get serious with anyone. I could go out and have a good time, make a few friends, maybe find a guy that I could be close with for a while.

By the time the trip was over I'd made a shaky decision to get to know this guy from the coffee shop. He was already reeling me in anyway, and it would get Flan off my back, so what could it hurt?

Days passed. The thought of going to see him at the coffee shop made me more and more nervous. When I wanted coffee, I either sent Flan, or went with her and sat in her car hiding, like a little kid. Once, I thought I saw him in the midst of a group of college students, but when I looked again I decided that I'd been mistaken.

As hard as I was trying to fight it, I realized that it was a losing battle. I didn't just *want* to see him. I *needed* to see him again, and so a week later I stood in my closet surrounded by a giant pile of discarded clothes.

Flan poked her head in clearly unsurprised, “Go with something simple, like a denim skirt and t-shirt.”

She pulled a skirt and an olive green shirt from the rack, of course, it was perfect for me and I wondered why she never let me pick her clothes like that. I threw on the clothes, pulled out a pair of thong sandals, and went to admire myself in the mirror. She was dead on as always and I looked nice without looking like I was trying too hard. I added a wooden necklace I'd gotten in Hawaii, and the matching bracelet to complete the look before rushing downstairs.

We got in the car, and Flan looked at me like she was waiting for me to do something.

“Are you going to be alright? We did just see him the other day. It's not a big deal.”

I must have looked as nervous as I felt.

“I'll be fine. Hey maybe he has a brother for you, then you won't have to keep nagging *me* to date,” I teased. She just rolled her eyes and looked away with a smile.

The drive was so short that I had to sit in the car for a minute and take a few deep breaths to calm myself. “Maybe we can just see if he's here through the window.” I suggested.

Flan looked appalled. “What is wrong with you? He's just a guy, and you've met him twice now! Besides, if he *is* in there and sees your car he'll probably come out anyway. So move it!” She gave me a shove before getting out herself.

I took one last deep breath and stepped out of the car. I hated feeling so unsure of myself. Guys were a whole new experience for me since I'd never even been on a date; avoiding closeness to humans and all. Before I even reached the door, I noticed that the shop was pretty empty. Maybe, if I was lucky, he wouldn't be there and I could spare myself the embarrassment I felt coming on. Then, the thought of him not being here, suddenly, made me a little sad as I realized that I really *did* want to see him again; no matter what kind of wreck he'd turned me into.

There was no line as we walked right up to the register, and waited for the man behind it to finish wiping down the machines behind the counter. Then he turned to help us.

My legs nearly went to jelly as he came to face us with a smile. *Oh my God! He works here?* I screamed in my head.

“Saydie! How's it going? How'd that razor work out for ya?” He asked, with a twinkle in his eye.

I stared at him for a moment with no idea what he was talking about. Then, I remembered. “Oh, the razor is great, thanks for that. Did you like it Flan?” I turned to her and she nodded.

“It's great.” she said.

“So you work here? I've never seen you before and like I mentioned the other day we come here a lot.” I asked.

“Um, yeah actually Marlene is my Aunt. She's been having some trouble keeping employees around, so I offered to help out. Bills don't pay themselves and I love coffee so it was a win-win. I just started a few days ago actually.” A sheepish grin came across his face and I couldn't help but smile back.

“Are you guys taking off? I was just about to take a break if you want to hang out for a few.”

Flan answered before I could, “We have some time. We'll find a table. Two mochas, and see you in a minute?” He nodded and rang us up. Flan handed him the money and dragged me to the nearest empty table.

“He's kinda sexy in an apron, huh?” Flan teased with a smile

“I just don't understand why my brain seems to shut down when I try to talk to him.” I moaned quietly, ignoring her question.

“I think it's cute. You have a little crush.”

“Shut up Flannigan.” I only called her that when she was pushing my buttons, which wasn't very often, but she was doing it now. She laughed at me, and patted my hand. “You're going to be fine. Just work on getting over the jitters and you'll be all set.”

“You think so?” I asked unsure, she nodded with complete confidence on her face, and I felt a bit better.

When Rhys brought our drinks over, Flan motioned for him to sit in the chair next to mine and began to bombard him with personal questions. I quickly learned that he was 21, played football at the university on a scholarship, and had a double major in business and economics.

As he finished talking, a thought came to me. “That seems like a lot of work, when do you find time for yourself? Your friends, your girlfriend, your family?” Flan raised an eyebrow at the question, impressed that I'd found a slick way to ask.

He scratched the back of his head with a nervous laugh, and looked down at the floor before he replied, “Well it doesn't leave me a whole lot of free time, but I see my parents on holidays. I see my Aunt at work. I hang with friends at school, and my girlfriend and I are no longer together, so that frees up a little more time for everything else.” Relief and exultation flowed over me at the same time, he was single. *YES!*

Then my conscience kicked in. He was a *human*. I'd never dated anyone, let alone a human, and had never planned to. Frustration came over me, as I debated on whether or not to stick to a plan that had worked for hundreds of years.

Hundreds of lonely years you old cat lady. I reminded myself. Hell, I couldn't even get a read from him to know what kind of person he was, it would be completely against my personal rules to be involved in any way with a human I hadn't at least scanned first.

Then a voice of reason in the back of my head spoke, “*Humans get to know each other without any powers at all, you want to live a human life, right? Try acting like one.*” That's when I realized, that I was losing the battle with myself, as my plan seemed to change itself against my will. The draw I felt toward him was so strong. I wanted to be near him, to talk to him, to get to know him, and it was like I *had* to. It wasn't a choice.

“Saydie?” Flan whispered and startled me out of my mental tug of war. I looked at her and nodded but when I turned to Rhys a sudden wave of confidence came over me and I found myself thinking that maybe I *could* do this.

“*Be human. Be happy*” the voice in my head spoke again, and this time my resolve changed without question.

“I have to get back to work, but I hope I'll see you again soon?” Rhys stood, looking directly at me. Flan glanced at me with a knowing smile.

“I hope so too.” I said honestly and stood up, “It was nice running into you again.” I smiled at him and he smiled back looking like he was going to say something, but then stopped himself.

“Alright then, I'll see you around.” he smiled and then turned quickly to walk away, looking slightly disappointed. Flan and I looked at each other and shrugged, before heading out to the car. She was in and buckling her seatbelt and I was just sliding into my seat, when I saw him rush back out the door waving at us.

“Saydie!” he called. I exchanged a confused look with Flan, but then she waved at me to get back out of the car. Leaving my keys in the ignition, I got back out and closed the door behind me, just as he closed the distance between us. He stopped and scratched the back of his head, looking very nervous again. I couldn't help but think how sexy he looked even now when he was obviously flustered.

“Um, I...I was wondering... if you might want to go out to a late dinner with me tonight?” The flush across his cheeks was cute, as he waited anxiously for my answer. From the corner of my eye, I could see that Flan had rolled her window down to hear and was nodding enthusiastically, encouraging me to say yes.

I reached in my purse for a pen, and held my hand out to him. When he grasped it in his own, I felt the electricity again, but tried to concentrate as I turned his hand over and wrote my number on it.

“Call me when you get off and we'll work out the details,” I said with a smile, his hand still in mine. His face told me that he was definitely feeling the charge that surrounded us once again.

He opened his mouth to speak, but didn't seem to be able to complete a thought.

“Do you....did you...?”

I knew what he was asking and felt the blush as I nodded. He seemed to relax, with the assurance that the feeling between us wasn't his imagination. I was the first to let go, though unwillingly. I just wanted to stay with him and never leave.

“I guess I'll see you later then, I'll call you around 8?” I smiled and nodded happily.

“I'll talk to you then.” I replied as he leaned down a bit to exchange a wave with Flan through the windshield. I opened the car door again and got in staring at his retreating back,

“Wow Saydie you have it bad, and he is hot! That man looks like he should be on the cover of GQ.”

I discovered that I was very much back to myself now that he was gone.

“Of course you'd picture the guy I like in his underwear.” I grumbled back and she smiled.

“He's all yours honey. A girl can dream though, right?” I couldn't help but laugh at her as I started the car to head home. The image of him in nothing but underwear popped into my head before I quickly pushed it away with a grin.