



Chapter 5

"Yup. That's me. Hi, Ms. Frizzle. It is good to see you," I put on a good smile and she is hugging me before I can even process that she is off the latter. I hug her back and start to feel a little more at peace. Until...

"I heard about the crash and your mom. I am so sorry for your loss, honey." And there goes that peacefulness. Why the fuck did you have to bring that up? I continue to hug her and awkwardly just say that I am fine and glad to be back. We carry on with the formalities and the assortment of questions she has for me about my life. I again dodge the important ones. By now I think I have worked up enough courage to ask about the job.

"So, Ms. Frizzle, I actually came here because I saw that you had a "Help Wanted" sign out front. Is the position available still?" I ask hesitantly, hoping she says yes. To my utter relief she does, and asks if I am interested. We go through the whole why, when, how much and she offers me the job on the spot. Nobody really cares what you can do as long as they like you enough.

I end up talking to Ms. Frizzle for another hour about the last six years until I have to go. It was nice to see her, and I am so happy I don't have to continue to search for a job. However, it is less hours than part time job. She didn't want me to be spread to thin so I can only work two days a week for her. Although, I know that isn't the real reason. She is trying to give me time because of my mom. It was obvious. I might look for

another part time job just to keep myself occupied. Just a few times a week.

I said goodbye to Ms. Frizzle and told her I would see her Wednesday. As I got in my car my stomach growled and I noticed it was lunch time. Ok, well the first encounter wasn't bad. Maybe, I could do one more and stop by Frank's Dinner. They have the best milkshakes and burgers in town, and I really want one. Plus, I haven't seen Franky in years and I really miss him.

Lee's POV:

I pull into the dinner parking lot, park, and wait.

Maybe this was a bad idea, there is kind of a lot of people here.

"Ok, close your eyes, breathe in, breathe out, and again." I mutter this to myself just like Francesca told me to when I get overwhelmed. A few moments pass and I feel a little calmer. I know I start school tomorrow and I will see everyone, I might as well rip off at least half of the bandaid now.

I grab my stuff and get out of the car. As I walk to the front door, I feel like I am walking to my death. Actually, I would rather be doing that. I grab the door handle, walk in, and stop. It is sort of loud and smells of grease, this feels right. I look over and there are a few booths that have kids my age. Cue the anxiety. I am brought out of my train of thought when I hear someone yell my name.

"Lee! Sweetheart, is that you?" Frank asks as he walks out from behind the counter. He is in jeans, a white shirt, and a white apron with grease on it. He has a big smile on so I guess he is

happy to see me. I just smile and walk over to him.

"Yeah, Franky. It's me." I say smiling.

"Well, I'll be damned. I never thought I would see the day that you came back, and look at you. You are all grown up!" He says while he pulls me into one of the worlds best hugs and lifts me off the ground. Wow, I forgot how good his hugs were. It is like hugging a fluffy marshmallow. He lightly sets me down and just looks at me.

With a sorrowful face he says, "I missed you kid, I really did. I couldn't be happier that you are back, although, I am sorry it was under these circumstances."

Smile and nod.

"Yeah. Me too. But it is good to be back."

God, please change the subject.

His face brightens and he asks, "Permanently?" His voice is full of hope and to be honest that warmed my heart. It is nice to feel wanted again.

"Well, I can't promise that, but I can promise for at least the next two years. I'm living with Luca." He smiles. I really missed him. He was always like a grandfather to me. He taught me how to make pancakes, change car oil, and much to my mother's dismay, taught me to drive a stick when I was eight.

"Well, I will take it! Now, can I get you your usual?"

"If you remember it, yes please. I am starving over here!" I say with my personal touch of drama. He looks concerned just like

he always used to when I was younger and I would tell him I was hungry. This won't be so bad, just like old times.

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