

The Date

by Anijade

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Prolouge

Chapter 1 of 1

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Kingston was a cozy college town that didn't stand out from any other college town. It had all the amenities that larger towns had and it had one thing in particular that stood out. Off the main drag was a yellow cottage that had been turned into a bakery called Wishful Thinking. Wishful Thinking was owned by Stasia Collins. Stasia was a 32-year-old engineer-turned baker. She had had the idea of opening her own store five years ago and two years later her dream had come to fruition. Wishful Thinking had become a popular hang out place not only for the confections she created but the warm homey atmosphere she reveled in.

People often asked Stasia why she had gone into the food business and she always floundered on what to say. The utter truth was too personal and painful so she resorted to something as close to the truth as she could.

"I wanted a job that allowed me to have a life close to what I wanted."

She knew it was cryptic but was as honest as she was going to get with her customers. As for the employees, the four people who worked with and for her knew better. There was Peter, who worked as a salesperson/baker, Elaine, the cake decorator, Mitchell, the all-around hand and Janie, her assistant. The staff of Wishful Thinking was a family of sorts that held no secrets except one. The truth of the matter was that Wishful Thinking was the only dream Stasia had that she thought she had a chance of ever living, so she had put all of her eggs in one basket and ran with it. Luckily the place had been a success. Every night Stasia took pleasure in cleaning everything up and heading upstairs to the three bedroom apartment above the store. The whole place was her sanctuary where she had no fear, only the loss of what she had given up on.

A typical day at the shop started at 5:00 a.m. when Peter arrived to start the bread. Stasia, Janie and Elaine arrived an hour later followed by Mitchell who opened the store at 10. From then on the day was full of families and students all who were ready to clean the place out of all it's sweet goodness. While Stasia was always friendly and fun you could tell that she was holding back, hiding a part of her. Every so often some young colt from the school would ask her out and she would politely turn him down usually with the excuse of age difference or that she was busy. Every time it happened Elaine would shoot Peter a look and they would shake their heads. They could never understand why Stasia had given up on the idea of love.

Stasia never commented on her reluctance for a relationship, but had started making plans for her life. It was the first time in four years she had ever kept a major secret from them but she needed to keep this one close to her heart. At night she would look in the mirror and wonder if it was all worth it. The pain often felt too much for her heart to carry but she continued using the hope of a new dream to keep her afloat. The others never knew about her bouts of depression and she kept a bright smile on her face most of the time. It was hard not letting the loneliness get to her and sometimes she didn't understand it. She had a good life with friends and family but it was lacking and she knew that it would never be whole. There was the realization that not all her dreams would be hers that spurred it on mostly, but she tried to keep it at bay at least in front of everyone.

One afternoon a group of guys walked in, obviously frat alums, and Stasia wrinkled her nose a little in disgust. The frat guys always got to her the worst, mostly because of their "better than everyone" attitude. However she kept smiling even though they were loud and rowdy. At first the guys were quiet but once Janie and Stasia came out they started in on them talking about their bodies and making crude comments about their clothes. Janie was able to laugh it off as nothing but for Stasia, their words latched onto one of her many hidden insecurities causing her to retreat back to the kitchen. Little did she know one of the guys noticed her off reaction and calmed the other guys off. When they left he looked back where she had vanished with an odd look on his face that changed into determination.