

Walk With You

by Anna Heal

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Prologue

Present Day

This. This can't be happening.

I knew I felt that familiar warm fluttering feeling in my stomach and I ignored it.

Stupid.

I would face palm myself if it wouldn't make me look absolutely crazy in front of all these people I'm pretending to know.

I can do this.

Or I could just send myself sprawling across the floor and hide underneath one of the beautifully laid out dining tables until the charity gala is over. *No, no I can do this.*

He doesn't look that good, does he?

Yup, sure does!

I really have tried to forget about him. It doesn't help when you've dreamt of the person almost every night for a few months.

So what if I've googled him over and over to see what he's been up to... with her.

I'm. So. Screwed.

As much as I've tried to convince myself in the last 6 months that that night meant nothing, that he has a girlfriend forgetting him has been the bane of my existence. I've felt like such a lovesick ass, that after I told my closest friends about that night a few months ago, I've avoided the subject ever since. I don't think my best friend Ella is convinced. She sucks like that, always knowing what I'm thinking before I realize I'm thinking it. She's too perceptive when it comes to my useless love life but damn I love that girl.

Now here he is, charming the panties off all of the women in the room and making the men think twice about their nonexistent gym memberships.

My stomach does another flip when I see a small hand in his bent elbow and then another being placed on his broad chest. Her melodic laugh sounding like nails on a chalkboard to my ears. That's her. The reason I cut that night off. The reason I ran with my tail between my legs even before I knew the truth. The reason we could never be.

Chapter 1

6 months ago

"Seriously Ella, I'm going to be fine. It'll be good for me to do something other than work for a change." I sighed into the phone, knowing that my best friend is just worried about me being in the big city all by myself. I feel like all I've done lately is wake up, go to work, come home and sleep. Maybe even eat, if I can remind myself. I love my job, but working as a nurse in the NICCU at Children's Hospital of Los Angeles is definitely not boring or laid back.

They've sent myself and a few of my coworkers to New York City for a week for long conference on the further development of our Critical Care unit. So, technically I'm not completely alone. However, with our free time tonight and tomorrow I've decided to indulge in my usual solitary tendencies and venture out alone to see the sites.

"I'm not worried; I just want you to have fun in a safe way." Ella has been my best friend since we were 12 years old. She knows me better than I know myself. Which is annoying but I can't say that it hasn't worked in my favor a time or two in the past. She, along with my roommate Shannon and her boyfriend Jon, are the closest thing I've ever had to family. They hate it when I travel for work but it gives me a chance for complete anonymity in a new place to just relax and be free. Perk of an otherwise sometimes stressful career choice.

"I promise I will phone you tonight when I get back and text you a couple of times tomorrow so you know I'm not dead in a ditch somewhere." I laugh in her silence because I know the look she's giving me through the phone.

"Don't joke like that Izzy!"

There are only three people in this world that can call me Izzy, to everyone else I'm Isabelle and that's the way it'll stay unless someone wants to feel my wrath.

"Okay, okay, I'm sorry. Listen, I'm not going to go super far. Tonight I promised to have a drink with my coworkers then tomorrow I'm going to do a bit of sightseeing. It'll be fun and I'll be careful, Ellebell."

I knew I had her smiling with that one so all I got in response was "Love you, Izz! Text me tomorrow!"

"Love you too!"

I put my phone down on the hotel coffee table and go to the bathroom mirror to fix my makeup for the night.

Quick drink, then I'm coming back here and putting on the plushest robe I've ever felt, throwing on a mud mask and going to sleep to rest up for my day tomorrow.

True to my word, one drink later and I've had enough. Not that I'm a downer or anything but my fellow nurse and manwhore extraordinaire Mike has already bagged and tagged two different women and I'm pretty much over the giggles and sucking noises coming from the opposite side of the table. With quick goodbyes and ducking motions to get away from Mike's slimy hands I make my way back to my room and begin my relaxing night as a hermit. Tomorrow is going to be my day to get lost and maybe find myself all at the same time.

Chapter 2

One thing you can count on in New York is you'll never be bored. Central Park, Empire State, Times Square, I saw it all and I know it isn't anywhere near enough to begin to understand the ins and outs of the city that never sleeps. The hustle and bustle is completely different to that of L.A.'s but I'm definitely smitten with this city already. The other different thing is the heat, thank god I put on a casual navy short sleeve sun dress today or I'd be one of the puddles the taxis frequently drive through. Choosing my black flats over my Saint Laurent nude pumps also earns me a pat on the back, even though I wrestled with wearing them just because they cost me a small fortune. Wearing them at every occasion is my way of telling myself that the purchase was justified.

Coming back to the hotel I drop off my pile of crap which I'll have to convince myself was needed later and the touristy souvenirs I got for Ella, Shan, and Jon. I decided to go back out for some food after the sun went down and when the cooler air sets in. I wanted to enjoy more of the city but most of all I was getting hungry and that needed to be resolved. Pizza needed to happen and now. Armed with just a Wristlet and enough money for food and maybe a taxi ride I make my way through the front doors of the hotel. I'm momentarily stopped by the immense number of people still walking around on the sidewalks, this city really just never quits. I'm starting to love it here.

After walking for what seems like an entire afternoon, I'm completely entranced by the traffics, people, buildings, and random things New York has to offer. I feel like those tourists who wear the fishing hats and sunglasses with cameras around their necks, taking pictures of every single building and interesting thing they can. Except I'm not wearing a hat nor did I bring a camera because apparently it needed to stay on my kitchen table. I didn't realize I'd left it until Shannon texted me when I was already on the plane. I yelled "Damnit!" super loud while most people on the plane were asleep, they were not impressed.

I decided to stop and ask a local (I assumed he was local by his accent and passionate hand gestures when he talked) where to go for pizza. Three people stopped and simultaneously said "Di Fara" so guess where I'm going! I hop in cab, a little nervous from hearing stories about how New York cab drivers drive, and tell him my destination. Just like that he knows, no need for a direction or address. Damnit New York, you're making it really easy to love you right now.

Pulling up to the curb I hand the driver who didn't kill me or drive us into oncoming traffic, some cash. A warm fluttering feeling happens in my stomach. Apparently I'm hungrier than I thought. I attempt to gracefully hop out of the taxi and by gracefully hop, I mean fall in the most unladylike way I could have possibly imagined.

Except I don't hit the ground.

Chapter 3

I love that moment when you're in a relationship and you're so comfortable with each other that you could hold each other for hours and just be. This isn't that moment.

Stepping out of the taxi instead of hitting warm concrete like I thought was going to happen, I hit a wall of warm strong chest. Two arms corded in muscle wrap around me to keep my face from hitting the ground. Realizing I've been caught mid fall I pull back and stare at said chest covered by a dark grey t-shirt. Up even further, catching dark stubble across a strong jaw, full lips with quite possibly the whitest teeth I've ever seen in my life, a straight nose and two blue eyes shaded by a dark blue baseball cap.

Stunning.

It's the only word I can think of at this moment. Thank god I don't mutter it to myself to make this embarrassing moment just that much worse. "Hi!" A deep soothing voice comes out of those full lips I've been staring at and I finally realize that the gorgeous face is talking to me and I should probably switch where the blood supply is flowing and turn my brain back on to say something intelligent. "Hi!"

Smooth, Isabelle.

Noticing he's still holding me, I begin to peel myself away and instantly notice the lack of warmth and comfort. I regret my decision immediately.

"Thank you, for catching me. I didn't mean to be such a spaz and fall on you."

"No problem, it happens. Not that I have beautiful girls fall on me every day. Not that you're beautiful, I mean you're beautiful but..."

Did he just call me beautiful?

I would break out in a happy dance but let's not get carried away right now.

"Are you okay?" He asks rubbing the back of his neck. Strong biceps peeking out from his t-shirt momentarily make me feel like my IQ has dropped 50 points.

Now, I am not a girl who gets speechless around guys. I've dated before, had two previous boyfriends both for a few years a piece. I've been hit on more than I can count. Mostly when I'm out with Ella because she looks like a real life Scarlett Johansson except her legs go on for days, attached to a body that belongs to a Victoria Secret model.

But that's not the point.

I can usually keep my cool pretty well but right now this guy is making me feel like a goddamn fan girl.

"Fine, really." I say, trying not to blush.

"You going to Di Fara? Should I watch you go so you don't run into anyone else?"

Smug bastard.

"No thanks, I think I can manage not to mow anyone else down on my way."

All I need is to locate my Wristlet which I probably dropped during my extremely elegant fall. Crap, where is it?

Did he pick it up?

I look up to find him looking at me like I've lost my mind not my money. Great, he's just getting all the best sides of me tonight isn't he?

"I think I must've dropped the wallet I was holding." I explain to him. Looking towards the ground he lets me know,

"I didn't see one when you stepped out of the cab."

What?

That can only mean one thing. It's still in the back of the taxi that's long gone now.

Crap, crap, crap.

That means I have no money for a ride home, and worst of all no money for my pizza craving. Well I'm just rounding out this night quite well if I do say so myself.

"Oh god, I left my money in the back of the taxi! Do you think I can call the taxi company and see if they could come back?"

"You're not from New York are you?" He says while looking like he's holding back a smile.

Is he laughing at me?

"No, I'm not, but thanks for the help." I snap back at him crossing my arms.

"I'm sorry, I didn't mean to laugh. Seriously though, that really sucks is there anything I can do?" At least that sounded a little more sincere.

"No I left my cell phone at the hotel because I didn't think I would come out this far and now I'm seriously regretting it." Especially now that it's getting dark out and I have no idea which direction my hotel is even in.

"Where are you staying?" he asks.

I reply before I can stop myself, "The Marriott Marquis."

"Here, let me buy you a cab ride back." He reaches into one of his pockets in his jeans as I scope out how they fit him in all the right places and pulls out a black wallet.

"Uuum no, absolutely not! There is no way I'm just going to take some strangers money. I'll just walk back."

"That's like a 3-hour walk! You're not walking alone, at night, in a city you don't even know!" Geez, he sounds like Ella. Let's face it though if he knew me, he'd know my stubborn ass won't listen anyway.

"Thanks for the advice but I'm perfectly capable of taking care of myself. Besides, I'll get to see the city up close and personal."

His face flashes with a look I can't quite place and I realize he looks a little familiar to me, like we've met before.

"Have we met?" Pulling his hat down, a slow blush creeps across his cheeks while he looks almost anxious.

"No, don't think so. I guess I just have that face."

Leaving it alone because I don't want to creep him out I reply with, "Thanks again for catching me earlier, I guess this is goodbye."

I really don't want it to be but if he's right and it's that much of a walk I better get moving. Mentally fist pumping myself again for picking the flats over the pumps. Before I can even fully turn around he blurts out, "I could walk you."

Wait, what?

"I meant what I said about you walking alone and if you won't take the money to get a cab then I'm coming with you."

"No really, it's fine. I can go alone you really don't have to."

Not taking no for an answer he takes a step closer to me and says, "I'm coming with you, and that's final. If you don't want me to well, then I'll just walk behind you the whole way and hope to god I don't get arrested for looking like a total creep. Is that what you want? Me to get arrested after I saved you?" Flashing the cutest half smile at me, I'm pretty sure my panties just disintegrated. At this point he could do whatever the hell he wanted.

What is wrong with me?

"Fine, but if you turn out to be a murdering psychopath I'll come back and haunt your ass!" A beautiful triumphant smile spreads across his face and again I'm hit with the feeling we've met before. If only I knew who he was, maybe I would've avoided the evening right from the start.

Chapter 4

Completely abandoning my poor pizza craving, we begin the long walk back to my hotel. I can't help but sideways glance at the glorious being beside me. Trying not to blush like a nervous wreck I try for small talk hoping my shaky voice doesn't give me away. "So you live in New York?"

"No, L.A. actually! I'm here for work." *What a coincidence.*

"Me too." He stares at me like I'm one of those girls who likes the same music as each person they date.

"No seriously, I'm here on business from L.A. too."

Raising his eyebrow at me he asks, "Really, what do you do?" "I'm a nurse at children's hospital there. We're here to talk about developing some of our units so that when new technology comes in we are ready for it."

"That's impressive!"

"I know!" I say with a wink, and he bursts into a laugh that I melt into. I'm about to ask what he does for a living too when he cuts me off with, "So you here all by yourself? No family? Friends? Boyfriend?"

Ah, the old fishing for information trick. Better keep him on his toes then.

"No I left my boyfriend back in the hotel room. Had to tie him up in order to go out by myself for the day." Trying desperately hard not to laugh, his face falls and a small scowl crosses his face. It's unbelievably adorable and again I find myself pondering why he seems so familiar to me. Still pouting, I decide I should let him off the hook. "I'm kidding, nobody is tied up in my room, my friends are back in L.A. Man, you should've seen your face!" I burst into laughter and watch as I see a big smile as he shakes his head at me, mixed with another unknown emotion. Relief?

"You like to think you're funny don't you?"

Why yes I do, random handsome guy who's walking me back to my hotel. Wait why *is* he walking me all the way? Is he expecting something? "This isn't some scenario where you walk me back and now you think I owe you, do you?" Looking genuinely insulted he stops walking and stares down at me. I really hadn't noticed just how tall he is until now. Of course I'm a short ass and can barely see over people in the seat in front of me at theaters so in my reality everyone is taller than me.

"No, why would you say that?"

Uh oh, dig yourself out of the hole Isabelle and dig fast.

"I'm sorry, I was only joking. Bad joke apparently. See not always funny, even though I think so." Looking up, I flash my best I'm-adorable-please-don't-be-mad-at-me smile and he seems to relax.

He starts walking again and I follow his step even though his long legs make me walk a lot faster than I normally would on my own. We fall into a comfortable silence while I look around the busy streets. I start to notice just how many people, mainly woman, are staring at my escort for the day. Apparently he notices too and pulls his hat down lower so his eyes are now in complete shadow. I'm not sure why he's still wearing it considering the sun has gone down, but if I was wearing a hat I'd have hat hair so maybe he's just as vain as I am and that's what he's trying to avoid. He has to know how

good looking he is, I mean how could you not with that face, that body, those arms...
Focus Isabelle!

Trying to ease his weird discomfort I steer the conversation in a different direction.
"So what about you? Are you here all alone in the big city all by yourself?"

"Not technically, everyone I'm working on this production with is here. Our days are usually really long so I just wanted to get away for the day and sink into the city for a while." *Production?*

I begin to ask "What is it you do...?" but he cuts me off with, "Hey look!"

Spinning my head to see the sign he's pointing at. "We can cut through Prospect Park." Well at least we'll have some decent scenery around us so that I won't stare at his ridiculously handsome face the whole time, like I am right now. My cheeks feel like they're glowing red as he catches my stare once again and gives me a quick wink. This is going to be one long walk.

Chapter 5

Seeing ahead what I can now note as a huge tree line I know we're quickly coming up to the outskirts of the Park. I spot a sign to my right that says 'Parkside Donuts' and I can actually hear my stomach growl like a wolverine. I'm not the only one who notices because my walking partner turns and gives me a look of impressive awe at the sound. Apparently he decides right there that he is not taking no for an answer and buys us some food for the road. Because I'm so hungry, and can't imagine not eating for another couple of hours, I oblige and we make the quick stop before going forward.

Armed with two croissants and two hot chocolates we're ready, even though I know when it comes to my stomach and I'm assuming his, this won't be enough for long. Just the outside of the park is beautiful and big! In all honesty not what I was expecting to see in the middle of Brooklyn but amazing nonetheless. We eat quietly while enjoying life around us but I feel the need to learn more about him and resolve myself to ask him questions when I'm done.

"So there's something I need to know." He stops mid chew to look at me.

"What's that?" He says suspiciously while looking at me with a worried expression on his face. Wow, he really doesn't like the attention on him. Kind of refreshing.

"What's your name?" He looks as though he may change the subject or not answer me at all which I don't understand. I start to argue that's it the least I should know about him when he answers, "Evan, my names Evan."

"Isabelle. Nice to meet you." Smiling he waves his hand in a mock royal bow.

"Yeah, I guess you deserve to know the name of the creep following you."

"Yes, probably should know in case he gets arrested." With mock horror he grabs my hand and says, "You would let me get arrested after all I've done for you?"

My laughter turns to nervous laughter when I realize he is still holding on to my hand. Warm fluttering stirs in my lower belly and my heart rate starts to pick up. I look up to stare at his lush mouth as his carefree smile fades. As I look into his blue eyes he seems to be wrestling with something. He takes a step closer to me, so close I can feel the heat pouring off of him. Taking a deep breath in, a small v creases the middle of his eyebrows as he closes his eyes. Just like that he lets go of my hand and begins to back away. Swallowing and looking anywhere but at me he says, "We better keep moving." Feeling completely confused and not going to lie, a little rejected, the only answer I can give is a small nod. Turning for him to lead the way I peer into the upcoming dark forest. At least it'll match the current mood.

Chapter 6

What in the actual hell just happened?

Silence has fallen upon the two of us as we avoid eye contact and stare at the sites. Turning on Flatbush Ave. I see a sign for the Zoo and Botanic Gardens. If only I had known about this place earlier I would have come here instead of going shopping for more clothes I don't need. I guess when you're stranded without any means of paying for anything and nothing to identify yourself with you realize just how materialistic life can be sometimes. Sinking deep into thought, I fail to notice Evans voice right away.

“Listen Izzy, I'm really sorry. I shouldn't have done that back there.” Only problem is, he didn't actually do anything.

Is that what's bugging me?

“My life is... Complicated. I'm not going to bore you with the details but just so you know I'm really enjoying the randomness of tonight with you. It's definitely been an interesting one so far.”

Interesting indeed. I've always had my friends around for most of my life adventures. We've travelled together, partied together, been in trouble together and all of life's moments in between. This is one of the first times I've ever really been alone with someone I don't know much about in a strange city. So far it hasn't been all bad except for the embarrassing rejection moment. But hey, I'm independent and strong and will not let the rest of my adventure be ruined.

Nearing the end of Prospect Park, I can see a large monument in the distance. A little sign on the side of the road reads ‘Grand Army Plaza’. “Hey there's a fountain over there, is it cool with you if we stopped for a bit?” I ask him.

“Yeah sure let's do it.” Crossing the street carefully to avoid being hit by anything on the still crowded roads we come up to the fountain. Placed in the middle of the road shrouded in trees its lovely and I can't help but close my eyes to the rushing sound of the water. I open my eyes to see Evan sitting on the edge staring up at the sky. His blue eyes sparkling from the lamp lights. More questions run through my head, damn my curiosity. If I were a cat, I'd be dead nine times by now.

Caught staring yet again, Evan looks at me with a small lopsided grin. “What are you smiling at?” I asked and of course I can feel myself blushing now.

Damn.

“You. You do this thing where you retreat into yourself. Where do you go?”

Do I still do that?

I guess I don't realize I do it much anymore. I used to do it a lot when I was younger, after my parents passed away. I was sent to live with my Aunt. She wasn't home very often and worked a lot so I was left to myself most of the time. I preferred it back then, it let me be alone with my thoughts and confused at how much my life changed in such a little amount of time. Two years later I met Ella, then a few years after that Shannon and

Jon. They brought me out of my world and into a one of fun, love and adventure. I really do miss them right about now.

“Sorry, I didn't realize I was doing it. Just lost in thought I guess.”

A small tick in his jaw catches my attention before he replies, “You know you can change your mind anytime right?”

“About what?”

He waves his hand in the air “About all this, you can stop being stubborn and just accept a cab ride from me and you can be back to your hotel.”

“Why? You want to get rid of me that bad?” I start to smile at my comment but realize he's not smiling back. *Okay.* “Did I miss something? I thought you said you were having fun.” Standing up he starts to shuffle his feet back and forth, “I am, this is... It's just... Never mind. I was just checking if you wanted it all to be over.”

Over? “This is the last time I'm going to say this; I'm not taking your money. If you want to go then go. I'm not stopping you. If this is all getting tedious and boring well I didn't ask you to come with me, you offered. You can leave anytime you want.”

We are at a standstill, rushing water, car engines, and the city moving around us all in the background while we are so still that neither of us know if the other is even breathing. I can see him thinking, mulling it over. If he didn't want to walk me why was he so adamant about it in the first place? I realize my palms are sweating, that my breathing has gone shallow and there is a lump in my throat and stinging behind my eyes. *Oh hell no, don't you dare cry woman!* I will myself not to lose my temper or my control. Then I realize it's not my temper or control I have to keep in check. It's my fear. Fear that he'll walk away and I'll never see him again. Fear that he'll actually leave me here. Alone.

Chapter 7

Well this is not the way I thought this day would end up going when I left my hotel this morning. Exploring New York with a complete stranger I can't seem to let go of and now with complete irrationality I am in fear of never seeing again. Wrapped in our tense standoff, he breaks eye contact first and starts toward the exit of the fountain and towards the street. This is it, he's going to leave and that will be the end of whatever this has been. I contemplate running after him but I know that'll just make me look crazy and I don't feel like making this situation anymore crazy than it already has been. He stops halfway up the path and turns to me, his stunning face shrouded in darkness. "You coming? Or am I going to have to wait for you all night?" Relief mixed with a sudden onset of nausea, I am stunned. Paralyzed to my spot I don't register what's happening right away and just stare back at the dark angel in front of me.

He makes his way back over to where I am and stops just inches from me. "I don't want to leave. I am having fun. I'm also confused as hell right now and don't know how to figure it out." Before my mind can stop me, I fling my body against his and wrap my arms around his neck. He catches me in a huge hug which leaves my legs dangling in mid-air due to his height and my lack thereof. "Sorry." I say into his neck. *God he smells good.* He rewards my apology with a low chuckle and squeezes me tighter to his body. I feel like I could stay here all night if he'd let me. Setting me down on solid ground, he stares down at me with a sarcastic smile.

"You got to stop being such an ass Izz." I mock insult and smack him across his chest.

Evan backs away laughing and I come back with, "Excuse me, my ass is awesome and don't you forget it." Walking backwards he shoves his hands in his pockets.

"I know I've been staring at it for the last hour and trust me, I won't."

I didn't mean it like that. But yeah, alright. Another mental fist pump for me.

This place really is a concrete jungle. Shops upon shops line the street as well as huge buildings, restaurants and staples like the Barclays Center which we just passed not too long ago. We've fallen into a comfortable rhythm now and it gives me a chance to reflect on the events of the day. How has this all happened? C'est La Vie when it comes to mine. I feel like I've never had the time to adapt to anything long enough without it changing drastically on me. That's why I've always been quick on my feet. Ready to roll with the punches, and there have been a lot of punches. I've always tried to not let life get me down and focus on the bright side, the future and everything it holds for me. Pity eyes are something I've become accustom too especially when it comes to my parent's death. I've always hated the looks on people's faces when I tell them. Probably why I don't tell very many people unless absolutely necessary anymore.

Signs up ahead for Manhattan Bridge pull me out of my reverie. "Do we have to cross a bridge?"

Evans gives me a sideways glance. "Yeah, of course. Don't you remember driving over one on the way to Di Fara's?"

Do I? So much has happened since then I feel like that was a week ago. “Yes, I just forgot. Is it safe to walk across?”

“I guess we’re going to find out.”

Chapter 8

Walking up the pedestrian path of the bridge the lights of Manhattan come into view. Beautiful twinkling, the city that never sleeps at her finest. Evan tells me about a spot on Washington Ave. where you can take a great photo of the bridge but of course my camera is still in my condo, so that's not happening. How does he know so much about this city even though he's not from here?

I have to ask, "Do you come to New York often?"

"Why do you ask?" Always suspicious this one is.

"You know so much about what's around here and you seem to have a pretty good idea where you're going most of the time." Relaxing a fraction, he says, "I've been here a few times. Mostly for work and I'm usually here for a few months at a time so I guess that's how I've become so familiar with it. This place has a way of growing on you and you don't even know it."

If that's not the truth I don't know what is. This city has been capturing my heart ever since I landed. The need to know Evan better is starting to get on my nerves so I try to stick with questions that won't make him uncomfortable.

"Where are you from originally?" His face lights up with mischief and he looks like a little boy when he answers, "Boston. I miss it. Wish I could live there full time with my family but my work calls for me to be in L.A. most of the time."

You can tell he's pretty close to his family by the way his mouth twitches upward when he mentions them. "Do you get to go back home a lot?"

"Not as often as I would like, but yeah I go back as much as possible. Especially since my niece and nephew are there. I miss their faces." A huge white smile spans his face and I think my heart just flipped.

We slow our pace a little bit on the bridge to take in the view of the East River and Lower Manhattan. A slight cool breeze stirs the still warm air and I close my eyes taking it in. I can feel Evan walking beside me, feel him like I've known him for years and we've walked beside each other our whole lives. It's a weird feeling, I've only ever had that feeling with one other person and that's Ella. I instantly hit it off with Shannon and Jon when I first met them but with Ella it felt like she had been around since the day I was born. That same feeling has been around ever since I fell onto the tall, lean muscle of a man walking next to me. Opening my eyes, I find him staring at me with a smug grin on his face.

"I did it again, didn't I?"

"Yep! Off in never Neverland once again." I barely hear him say "Where do you go Wendy?" ever so softly as he means to say it to himself mostly. I'm not usually this comfortable with strangers where I let my guard down entirely. It's starting to make me just that -uncomfortable.

Noticing my shields going up he jogs ahead and over to the edge of the pedestrian walkway climbing up the chain-link so his head barely sees over the top. Of course I

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