

# Love Was Near

## Chapter 2

### He's Everything

All my troubles began in Italy where I met Milo. I know what you're thinking, you think I'm weak; that I can't blame everything on Milo, that I should take some responsibility. Fair enough, I'll take responsibility for not seeing what was coming, for being naïve and for wanting to be in love.

Milo was everything my father didn't approve of, maybe that's why I was so attracted to him. Or was it his Italian accent? I'm not sure what it was, but I was like a moth to a flame. I hadn't felt this way before, but I liked it and didn't want it to end; neither did Milo. He wanted me to stay with him; he couldn't understand why my father wouldn't want me to be happy, but I did. It's part of the Dad job description: make sure your daughter's not having too good of time.

My father was always involved in my life, but since my mother's death, he was even more so. He knew he was unable to take her place, but that didn't stop him from trying. He thought this writing workshop in Rome would be just what I needed to inspire me. I agreed because it was in Italy and I liked the idea of getting away from Chicago.

**I wanted to forget about the book and my bank account, even if it was only for a little while.**

He was right, I did love Italy, but no, I didn't get inspired to write. I spent most of my time with Milo; he was all I could think about. I was in love, and I didn't want to leave. How could I explain it to my Dad? "Hey Dad, met a cute Italian guy, not coming home, please send money." If you don't know my dad, to trust me; this wouldn't work.



Dear Diary,

People are rushing all around, but the couple in front of me doesn't know anyone else exists. He's staring into her eyes; she's laughing and whispering in his ear. I feel so alone: why can't Milo and I be together? Am I making the right decision?

Dad was hopeful the writing workshop would inspire me to finish my manuscript, but I spent more time touring the country with Milo than I did at the workshop. Dad won't appreciate my real world experience nearly as much as I did, but I couldn't pass up the opportunity to truly see Italy through Milo's eyes.



What if I don't have what it takes to be a writer? Maybe Dad's right, and I'm just a girl that doesn't want to get a job. It's probably best if he thinks I accomplished all he had hoped for over the summer. He'll be happy, and in a way it's true. I was inspired, just not to write.

I wish I were returning with a few more Italian phrases for my father. He thought I would pick it up over the summer, but it's easier if you just act like you don't know any Italian. I don't see why I would want to focus on a foreign language? I write in English.

I miss him already, is that possible? No one has ever

said my name the way he does. Before I left, Milo whispered in my ear, "Don't go, Bella, stay with me." Oh, how I desperately wanted to answer, "Ci," but how could I?



My father would track me down and make me come home. I struggled to make my lips say the words, "I can't, not now, but I promise, I'll come back as soon as I can." Then he whispers, "io ti amo."

Now I wished I'd put more effort

into learning Italian. I knew what it meant, but I didn't want to stumble over the words and ruin the moment. I opened my mouth and out came the most fluent Italian, "io ti amo." Maybe I could speak Italian when I wanted to. Those words are on repeat in my head. They're all I think about.



Dad often reminds me, "You need to take control of your destiny" but, what if staying in Italy with Milo, is my destiny, and I might never be happy again.

Am I making the right decision? What if I stayed, what would happen? Would I learn Italian and serve tables in a ristorante with red and white checked tablecloths? I haven't thought about the future, I never needed to. Even after leaving college, which dad wasn't happy about, he still supported me. An Italian voice over the speakers announces our train is ready to depart. The doors slide close, and the train begins to move. I miss him.



What do you think?

Should I stay or should I go home?

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What would you do?

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Have you ever liked someone you knew wasn't good for you?

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What attracted you to them?

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