

One - The Reunion

So you know all of those cliché books you find in the teen-lit section on Wattpad, about an inevitable love between a girl and her brother's hot best friend? Well I am proud to say I have never read one. The reason why is totally not because it would depress me, as all of the stupid happy endings are fake and definitely unrealistic.

Well... Actually, that is kind of the reason why I stay away from that genre. It's all because of a boy named Zander Reece Tomlinson, who is unfortunately my brother's best friend, and like the stupid cliché teen idiot I am, I'm in love with him.

Growing up there was only one thing I ever wanted to be. A dancer. It is in my blood considering my parents met at their dance school, and I could basically dance before I could walk. They bought their dance school a er qualifying as teachers, and lived happily for a few years, until it became apparent that the school was not enough of an income to support them, especially when my mum became pregnant with my eldest brother Kai. Although they had to sell up and pursue more secure careers, they made sure to install the same love for dance they had into their five children. Yep, five – they were crazy I know. It was always my mums dream to one day buy back the dance studio (where we all had regular lessons), but tragedy struck before she got the chance.

When I was twelve years old, my parents went away for a romantic holiday – their first in twenty-one years without any kids, but they never came back. They were hit by a drunk driver who lost control, and all of a sudden, my siblings and I were orphans. Kai who was twenty at the time moved back in to look a er Eden, Isaac, Owen and me and became our legal guardian. Those were dark times, but dancing helped me to get through it as a reminder of them. I will forever be grateful to Kai who took the role as family head, becoming a father figure to the twins and me, and Eden who became a second mother, yet still our cool older sister at the same time.

It has been six years since that terrible day, and we are all largely in a better place now. Kai is twenty-six, married to a wonderful girl named Pippa and has an adorable two-year-old named Harvey. Eden is twenty-three, gorgeous, and fulfilled our mums dream by buying back 'The Brook School of Dance' a er she qualified as a teacher and secured a loan. She also has a hunk of a boyfriend named Zach whom she lives with in the city. The twins Isaac and Owen are living up their youths as young adults in college with women bizarrely throwing themselves at them. I have no idea what they see in them – all I see is my two impish stinky older brothers. As for me, today is my first day in college. I am going to the same one as Isaac and Owen, as considering we have no parents we are all very close, and they want to be able to look out for me. My dream would have been to go to Juilliard, but I doubt I would have been accepted as so many try but fail, and I would not be able to see my family very much.

Yes, going to NYC is a lot more practical, and it means I can live with my best friend Waverly, who has been like a second sister to me since we were five. Waverly is quite possibly the most beautiful girl on this planet, the most incredible blend of black and white with all-year-round bronzed skin, a perfect wild afro of chocolate hair, striking emerald eyes and naturally plump lips. She is beautiful on the inside as well though, being the most kind and humble girl I know. Her nickname is Mouse as she is so quiet and shy, always scurrying along with her head bent down. Waverly is also a dancer, but she didn't pursue it like I did, focusing on her studies to pass with straight As. She is going to be studying psychology at college, and I know she is going to ace it as she is amazing at everything.

I am getting my degree in business and management, as although I will have a job at Eden's dance studio when I graduate (I o en help out there), I have to be prepared to pay the bills as I get older and maybe want a family as well. Still, that is a long way o since I find kids seriously creepy. It's the same with old people. Also, I do need to find an acceptable baby daddy, which is going to be hard considering there is only one name on my list, and he is a BIG no – no. If only he wasn't so sweet and kind and hot and...

"Hey Nell, how are you?"

I gasp, as suddenly the man of my thoughts is right in front of me.

Is it possible he got hotter in the last four months, three weeks and two days since I saw him? Not that I'm counting of course.

"Zander... I'm... I'm fine." I gulp and try to play it cool, although my heart is pounding in my chest and my hands feel clammy – a usual side effect of being around him. He really needs to give me a warning before sneaking up on me, as I need to mentally prepare myself to face his hotness. I wouldn't be surprised if he sends me into cardiac arrest one day.

"That's good. It's been a while, huh. Would you like me to take that?" He asks, gesturing to the box of my possessions I am currently trying to haul out of Isaac's car.

Being the dutiful big brothers they are, Isaac and Owen drove down to pick me up from Kai and Pippa's house, and have made a couple of trips to collect all of mine and Waverly's belongings. We are on the final load now, and Owen's friend Adam has been helping us carry up our stu to the third floor our apartment is in, considering the elevator is inconveniently out-of-order.

I may have forgotten to say that the twin's long time friend and my biggest crush also goes to NYC College. His presence here didn't help sway my decision at all. Nope. I haven't even thought about all the opportunities that I will have to admire his jaw as sharp as glass, charming smile and spellbindingly white teeth, and pale model-like skin. His eyes are my favourite feature of his - they are a piercing green which melt into an icy blue, and always look at me as if I'm the most delicate thing in the world. I definitely haven't thought about how I might get lucky and see him topless. I would literally pay to see his lean, muscular body and six-pack.

"Nell?" Zander prods, making me blush as I realise I was staring dreamily at his annoyingly handsome face.

"Oh erm, sure." I murmur, instantly regretting my decision when I see his drool-worthy muscles flex as he takes the large cardboard box from me.

Why is he so damn hot? Unfortunately I notice I'm not the only person who thinks so, as there are two girls hovering by a car opposite us that flash him bedroom eyes. Oh no... Maybe this wasn't such a good idea. How can I sit back and watch him hook up with random beautiful women? But then I remember why I love him so much. He notices the girls and gives them a polite smile before nudging me to follow him without a second look. He is just so nice, charming, good looking and sweet! He is the guy all parents wish their daughters would bring home. My heart melts in my chest as I follow him into the dull grey student-accommodation building, watching him smile graciously to everyone who meets his eye. He is the complete package, and I don't know how anyone could stop themselves from falling in love with him.

In my eyes he is perfect, which is why I am screwed. No one could ever compare to him, yet I doubt he will ever look at me as anything other than a little sister. Ever since he le for college with my brothers my life has been dull, and I found myself counting down the days until I could next see him. Even though he has only ever treated me like a friend, before he moved away we used to stay up late talking to each other each night, but when he went to college our relationship kind of just died, and we talked less and less until suddenly the conversation dried out like a lake in a drought. When he came back to visit his parent we shared secret smiles, but we never talked as openly as we once did. I suspected he had a girlfriend, but a er sneakily asking Isaac about it, he compared Zander to a monk, so it obviously wasn't that. Maybe it was just me. I was sixteen at the time and naive, but now that I'm legal and we are going to be seeing each other a lot, I'm hoping he will take more notice of me. His relationship with my brothers is a big obstacle in our way though.

As we finally reach my floor, I am faced with a familiar scene, which is my brother Owen pinning a er my best friend Waverley. He has had a thing for her ever since we were kids, and I know she secretly likes him too, but they annoyingly never seem to act on their feelings. It's not surprising - Waverley is a gorgeous, sweet angel of a girl whilst I am the bad influence. He has always had a so spot for her, and the way he looks at her is every girls dream. I would love them to get together, as I know Owen would never hurt her and will love her until the day he dies, but both are in a deep pit of denial, which is incredibly annoying for all onlookers. Owen is the one topic Waverley and I can't talk openly about. She is primly leaning against the wall next to our dorm door whilst Owen is casually relaxing next to her. He obviously said something to make her throw her head back in laughter, whilst she smiles on with a look of awe in his blue eyes.

"Oh Nell! Finally, we've been waiting for you!" Waverley blushes as she notices me standing there with Zander besides me. "Hi Zander!" She exclaims with a cheery wave.

"Hey Waverley it's good to see you again." He smiles at her with a nod of his head, in the kind way he always treats everybody. "So where do you want your stu Nell?" He asks as he turns his attention back to me, piercing me with his bright green eyes that make me flustered.

"Oh, erm in my room. Follow me... Also you have one more box in the car Waverley." I remind her as Zander follows me into my apartment.

"I'll help you Mouse." Owen is quick to o er her assistance whilst smiling with adoring eyes, causing her to look bashfully up at him and nod in response.

His six foot two frame is perfect against her five foot six, and their blindness to their feelings of each other makes me sick. Sighing I turn around and grimace at the mess – there are boxes of stu cluttering up the lounge and small kitchen-dining area, and you can hardly get into the bathroom. Most of this probably won't get looked at twice, but I am a hoarder through and through. Waverly and I have a room each, and as we are at the edge of the building, we both get a window to show us the concrete giants and smoggy sky. As we squeeze into my room I can't help but admire Zander, who looks runway ready even in just a pair of jeans and a simple Levi branded tee. Why can't he just fall in love with me? Well, I have a year to figure out if we have a destined future together, considering he is in his senior year, unless he decides to stay on for advanced courses of course.

"Is there anything else I can help you with?" Zander asks politely, and I sharply inhale as I notice how close we are considering the boxes cluttering my room have le limited space to stand.

He towers above me, as I am only five foot five whilst he is well over six foot, but as always, his height only serves to make me I feel protected. The atmosphere tenses as I gape like a fish, and I freeze, not daring to move as he li s his hand and tucks a freshly dyed strand of blonde hair behind my ear.

"I've missed you Nell." He whispers as his hand lingers by my cheek, and my heart is beating so fast and loud in my ears I worry he can hear it too.

His eyes are so vividly green, framed by long lashes he doesn't deserve, and staring into mine so deeply I feel like he can read my mind. Suddenly a distant door bangs open and someone curses, causing us to jump apart as if we had scorched each other. Zander rubs his neck awkwardly and looks anywhere but my eyes.

"I... I better go see what that was." I murmur with cheeks the colour of strawberries before turning and racing away from that awkward situation.

"Nell? You here?" My brother Isaac calls out in his deep voice.

"Oh, hey Isaac." I exclaim a little breathlessly as I jog into the main area of the flat.

"Hey Nell, all your stu is here now so I'm gonna get going. I will be back soon though... your next door neighbour is HOT." He exclaims with a wicked grin.

"Eww Isaac don't be gross!" I moan, well used to his man-whorish ways.

At the rate he's going he will never settle down, apparently because there are 'too many flavours to try to settle on just one'. He is definitely girl-obsessed and needs someone to tame him. He's been hitting on girls since he learned how to talk, and although Owen and he are close, Owen is much more quiet and serious whereas Isaac is over-confident and loves attention. My loving nickname for him is 'slut' - he's probably got about a hundred notches on his bedpost, and that's not even an exaggeration. Seriously, it's a wonder he hasn't got any STDs by now. To be fair though the girls do chase him (Owen too but he is far more respectable), and I guess if they weren't my brothers and I hadn't grown up with them tormenting me they could be viewed as attractive.

"Oh hey Zander, didn't realise you were still here." Isaac says as he heads into my kitchen to steal MY cereal as Zander slinks into the room looking guilty.

"Hey hands out the box you sicko!" I screech as I race forward to shove him, but unfortunately all those hours spent at the gym have paid o , as he just holds the box above my head, not even moving when I push him with an infuriating smirk.

"Hey I'm going to head o now guys. See you later." Zander calls out drawing my attention to him.

"Oh ok, bye Zander, thanks for the help." I reply with a small smile.

He seems undecided before he steps forward and pulls me into a warm hug. I feel at home as his muscular arms wrap around me, and his signature pine a ershave, which never fails to make me feel weak, surrounds me.

"B-Bye." I squeak and hesitantly wrap my arms around him as well.

Sneakily his lips hastily press against my forehead making me gasp. He always used to do that before he went away!

"I'm always here if you need me Nell, just call and I'll be there." He promises as he pulls back from me completely calm and composed, whilst I'm there wondering if I'm having a heart attack.

"See you back at the apartment Isaac." Zander calls out before giving me one last dazzling smile and leaving.

"Bwy!" Isaac calls out through mouthfuls of MY food.

"Isaac!" I whine, relieved when he surrenders the cereal and gets ready to go himself.

As I hear Waverley and Owen's voices saying goodbye to Zander filtering through the hallway, I sigh, wishing that we could be so much more than just friends.

Hi guys, I hope you enjoyed this first chapter! Love to you all xoxo

Edited

[Continue reading next part](#)