

The Soulmate Call

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Prologue-Lisabeth



I once watched a girl bite into almost every piece of chocolate in a heart-shaped box of chocolates. She would take a bite and put the chocolate back. I wondered why she did that with the chocolate.

Before I could ask her, she told me why, “Each one of us is like a piece of chocolate. Some guy comes along, and you give your heart to him. If he is not the right guy, it’s like he figuratively took a bite out of your heart before giving it back to you. All the pieces of chocolate with a bite in them are what your heart looks like when you have given it away more than once, only to get it back broken. The pieces of chocolate with bites taken out of them cannot become whole again because the bite damages the pieces of chocolate. Giving your heart to someone who is unworthy is giving a piece of yourself away you can never get back.”

That example stuck with me. Her analogy caused my reasoning behind why I always chose the type of guy I knew couldn’t break my heart.

Anyone would describe me as absolutely and completely selfish in my approach to picking boys. Selfish, meaning I wanted to enjoy life, but my heart I kept for one person and one person only. I would find a guy who had a girlfriend already, or a guy not worth giving your heart to, or one whom I knew my parents would not approve of.

Besides being selfish and not wanting a broken heart, I knew ‘Mr. Right’ had to be worthy of my parents’ approval. I wanted to have fun without commitment, but when I, Lisabeth Gilbert, settle down, I wanted my parents’ blessing.

When you are only looking for fun, you keep your heart guarded and surround it with six-inch steel walls. I’d yet to find a guy around worthy of giving my heart to.

The guy with a girlfriend, he obviously wasn't looking for a commitment, and since he would cheat on his girlfriend, he definitely did not qualify giving your heart to. The one who mirrored me, wanting to have fun, and not bring home to your parents' worthy, also wasn't looking to commit. If anyone of them started acting like they were thinking about something serious, I would end that relationship faster than it began.

Jeffrey Turner fit my only fun, no strings attached criteria. He had a girlfriend when we met. Instantly, I identified him as a total player. Only looking for a good time as well. He started off our friendship by flirting with me. It didn't hurt he was good at it, too. I also labeled him as the most gorgeous player I had ever met. Six feet tall, chocolate brown eyes (my biggest weakness), deep dimples (the kind that made an appearance with every movement of his mouth), a chiseled body, chestnut hair he kept cut military style, and lips that tasted delicious just by looking at them.

We met at Lonestar steakhouse where I waited tables when I turned seventeen. I came into work one day, and all the girls were talking about the new guy and how hot he looked. He had recently moved from Texas to be near his girlfriend, who also worked at the restaurant. He had moved in with his Grams and enrolled in the same community college I planned on attending in the fall.

We quickly became friends. We flirted and sought each other out at work every day. He'd call me on the phone to tell me about all his conquests back home, and I bragged about mine. Convincing a guy to agree to hook up with you when you straight up told him you wanted to have fun and did not want a boyfriend proved easy.

When I said hook-up, I'm not talking about sex. Definitely not that kind of player. No innocent girl either, but I drew the line at intercourse. I wanted to make out and go only as far as one could without doing the deed. I had my reasons.

We ended up in biology together at school. Rey (was what everyone called him, not Jeff but Rey, how sexy is that?) and I flirted while making plans to hook up for a couple of months.

The girlfriend always impeded us from ever actually getting together for fun. Fine by me because I enjoyed the flirting, and neither of us moved towards making a commitment or getting hurt.

We finally got in one date, a sort of lunch date, at one of those hole-in-the-wall Chinese restaurants. We went looking for a place to park afterward, but his truck broke down. What were the chances?

A couple of weeks later, he called me up to ask me to come over to his place. Of course, everything cute I owned had to be dirty that day. I threw on a pair of jeans and my favorite t-shirt of the singer Plumb; I found on my floor, with my platform flip-flops, and headed out the door.

We spent the next hour or two doing what horny teenagers do. We had fun making out, except he had a no kissing rule. Remember when I said he had lips that tasted delicious just by looking at them? Then, I found out I couldn't kiss them. Argh! Well, I had rules, so how could I argue with his rules. He made up the lamest excuse, though. "He wasn't cheating on his girlfriend if he didn't kiss me." My eyes were rolling in my mind at that line. Whatever all I heard in his reason, he did not want to kiss me.

When we finished, he had tears in his eyes. A strange sight for me to see a guy crying after you had been fooling around. He said he felt guilty, and he realized he loved his girlfriend. I couldn't fault him for that. I actually believed him. I stood there holding him while he sobbed. He made me promise to keep our afternoon to myself, so I did.

The next day, I walked in the parking lot at school to go to class, when he came racing up next to me in his bright two-toned green pickup truck. When he rolled his window down, I could tell something had him angry. He practically yelled at me, "Get in!" Confused, I opened the door and climbed in.

He accused me of telling some guy in one of my classes about us. The accusation so strange. While the scene played out so fast, I didn't even know how to defend myself. I denied

everything, but he didn't even hear me. The next words out of his mouth were, "Get out! I never want to see you again."

That day I remember as the most confusing day of my life. I respected his wishes and left him alone. That next semester, we had no classes together, and he had quit working at the steakhouse. Having gone our separate ways, we never ran into each other anymore.

He didn't break my heart the way a lover would, but we had become good friends over those few months. I missed our friendship. Not being one to hang onto those kinds of things, I moved on to the next guy that same day.

I think about him occasionally and wonder what happened. Maybe I will never know. It haunts me knowing I will never know what those delicious lips feel or taste like.

Lisabeth - July 10, 1999



The morning drive to orientation went at a snail's pace with all the traffic on the interstate. The drive into New Orleans early in the morning easily always a capital B. I dreaded spending my whole Saturday listening to lectures about how great UNO is.

For the first year of college, I went to the local community college, and now I had to move on to a university if I wanted my degree. On a Saturday morning, being a young 18-year-old, I would have rather slept on my day off.

I pulled up to the campus in search of a place to park; I had absolutely no idea where to go. Having never been there before. I should have probably checked the place out before today. At least I left early enough to guarantee I would not be late. I hated being tardy.

After finally finding a parking space, the time had arrived to go search for the auditorium where I planned on spending the next few hours listening to some speech about how the future was bright. I half expect to hear some lame slogan like, "The future's so bright, you'll need sunglasses."

Why didn't I see if anybody I knew planned on going to this thing? When I got closer to the building, I saw someone I knew. I felt relief wash all over me, thinking, "Maybe this day won't be that bad?" Seeing my friend Daniel eased some of the tension.

I couldn't even remember how, where, or when we met. He always seemed to be wherever I went. If it's at the coffee shop, I liked to hang out at, or with a group of friends. And there he

stood, waiting for orientation to start. He's one of those guys I could bring home to my parents, so I've purposely always kept him at a distance. He's also not the most attractive guy either. He's not ugly, but for some unexplainable reason, he never did it for me at all. We're close to the same height, which could have been worse. He could have been shorter than me. Looks wise, in my mind, he's plain old average, average hair, average eyes, average size, blah.

I felt saved, though, knowing I wouldn't have to sit all by myself through the long day. We walked into the auditorium, having the usual casual talk two people experience who are mere acquaintances and not great friends.

I walked through the auditorium doors with Daniel. I paused because sitting in the back row with his body turned around in his seat, looking at something outside of the doors, sat Rey. Then he moved towards me and my brown eyes met his brown eyes. I'm suddenly hit with a giant tidal wave of feelings. A wave of emotions I had never felt before. If Cupid really shot people in the butt with arrows, they hit mine. It felt a lot like love at first sight, or should I say love at first re-sight. It felt possibly, like my soul took over by taking a sledgehammer and utterly destroying any wall or barrier I had ever built around my heart. Out of nowhere, the first thought in my head surprised me. *"I love you, Jeffrey Turner."*

Rey never took his eyes off of mine. His gaze so intense I could feel it. I knew I did not see him open his mouth to speak, yet I knew with every fiber of my very being I heard him say, *"I love you too, Lisabeth Gilbert."*

Impossible, or crazy, came to visit me. I heard him say it in my mind. So shaken up, I nearly tripped going down the stairs while my mind spun. Rey jumped up to grab me by the elbow, and he pulled me close to him. While still looking me straight in the eyes, I heard in my head, *"You are not crazy."* This time he opened his mouth and asked, "Can we go outside and talk?"

The only words I could find to mumble out of my mouth were, "Give me a minute."

I strolled to a seat with Daniel to set my stuff down. Daniel must have seen something going on. “Are you all right? You are white as a sheet. You look like you might vomit or something?”

I paused and turned to him; my thoughts all over the place. I didn’t even answer him. All I could think about revolved around that first thought I had. “*I love you, Jeffrey Turner?*” Where did that come from? When did I fall in love with him? How come I just realized this? What was going on? These questions ran through my mind. Never mind the fact I heard his voice in my head, not once, but twice. Never mind, he loved me, too.

I thought Daniel may have been right, I might vomit. Without even answering him, I got up and headed out the door. I didn’t know where I was going, but I had to get out of there. The walls closing in on me, my chest getting heavier. I moved faster to get outside.

Rey



Stuck sitting in the back row at the stupid orientation my friends dragged me to. I haven't been myself for months. I only leave my house out of necessity. I haven't been up to moving on with my life pretending nothing ever happened. My friends finally wore me down. They wouldn't stop nagging me.

They meant well, but they didn't understand how stupid I acted. How I ruined the best thing that ever happened to me. How I pushed her away, and she didn't know why. How tortured I felt, knowing I would probably never see her again. How she's my happiness; I ran away because it scared me. I wasn't ready. Once I accept who we are to each other, I didn't know how to find her.

I sat there, in the back row in the stadium, doomed to spend a miserable day. When I suddenly somehow felt her presence. Certain she'd arrived there somewhere. Terrified to look around for her to find out my feelings were wrong, but also scared to not search and miss her. I didn't hesitate for another second; I turned around and quickly began scanning through the mass of people for her.

I found her. Lisabeth really had registered for the orientation, too. I couldn't believe my eyes. Am I really seeing her, or am I dreaming? Both fears, if a nightmare, I prayed I wouldn't wake up from.

She saw me, too. Our eyes met. I refused to look away. I may have felt ashamed of how I treated her, but I would not take my eyes off of her ever again. If she allowed me to look into her beautiful brown eyes forever, I would.

Proud of myself for remembering the color of her eyes. Most days I believed her eyes were every bit as brown as mine were, but some days I doubted my memory. There were days when my depression became so intense, I convinced myself I may have forgotten what she looked like, but I hadn't. How could I forget? She looked exactly the way I remembered her, and more.

While those thoughts ran through my mind, I heard her. I heard her in my head. She called to my soul, "*I love you, Jeffrey Turner.*"

My heart stopped. Before taking another breath, I spoke back into her thoughts, into her soul, "*I love you too, Lisabeth Gilbert.*" I knew this would probably terrify her, but she had to know I heard her. Desperate for her. I couldn't lose her again, even if it meant scaring her at first.

She tripped on the stadium stairs. I jumped to my feet to catch her. I pulled her close, never taking my eyes off of hers. Not wasting a second to drink in her smell while enjoying the feel of her body so close to mine.

I heard her saying she must be crazy, so I pushed my thoughts towards hers, reassuring her, "*You are not crazy.*" This time, I use my voice to ask her to join me outside. It's clear she seemed in some sort of shock because she asked me for a minute.

I continued to keep my eyes fixed on her; afraid if I looked away, she would disappear.

My friends noticed me smiling for the first time in months, causing their questions to come at me like speeding bullets. Without looking away from her, I told them, "It's her, she's the one, my Lisabeth."

She slowly headed out the door. I moved to follow her; her pace quickening. I knew I scared her, but I could only hope she would get over it. Once she understood who we were to each other, she would forgive me. I prayed.

She looked too adorable, pacing back and forth. When she started having trouble breathing, appearing to be having a panic attack or something. I immediately rushed over to her and gently pulled her to me. She let me hold her in my arms. She even rested her head on my chest. Lisabeth fits in my arms so perfectly.

I felt her body shaking, her heart pounding, and I felt lost, with no idea how to help her. Clueless about the how's of loving someone or taking care of them. Just one of the many reasons I ran away. I held her for a while before I even said anything. She slowly calmed down. When I felt her stop shaking; it gave me some comfort, hoping I did something right.

She looked up at me with her gorgeous eyes, making me want to tell her everything. However, I knew I needed to start slow, or I risked scaring her away. I struggled to know where to even begin. *"Yes, Lisabeth, you can hear my thoughts inside your mind. I heard your voice in my head and you can hear mine in yours."* I saw the confusion clearly all over her face.

Then I heard her, *"But how?"*

"It's a long story. I want to explain everything to you, but there isn't time for me to explain it to you how you deserve. The orientation is going to start. I don't want to skip anything I have to tell you. Will you eat lunch with me? I will start by telling you all I can get in during that time. I will tell you this. I know what is going on and why. I need to ask you to trust me and to give me a chance." I said all of this through our thoughts because I wanted her to get used to hearing my voice inside of her.

When she nodded her head, I continued with my voice. "I have to first tell you how sorry I am for the way I treated you that day. I acted like a scared idiot. I feared how I felt about you. I

made the whole thing up. I needed you mad at me. I didn't know how else to justify running away from you. Please forgive me."

I held my breath, waiting for her to respond. She surprised me by responding in our thoughts. *"Of course, I forgive you. I never held it against you. I understood something happened, and you did what you felt you had to do."*

When her words poured into my mind, it felt like she somehow made whole from the inside out. She completed me when she opened herself up to me and gave herself over to who we were. We were soulmates. She was the other half of my soul. Our souls had sought each other and had found each other.

I took her hand in mine to walk back inside. I felt I must tell her one thing, "Lisabeth, I will explain everything, but the one thing I want to mention right now is we can only hear each other if we are looking at each other. If you turn away from me, I cannot hear you and vice versa. It has something to do with our eyes being the window to our souls. I know that probably doesn't make much sense to you. It will after I tell you all about it. I didn't want you to say something and I miss it. I know that would probably confuse you more than you are already. I meant it earlier; I really do love you. I have loved you ever since I first laid eyes on you. Only problem, I gave into my fear of commitment, ignoring the feelings I had for you. I know, I am overwhelming you, so I am going to shut up now."

She stopped walking to look up at me. *"I am overwhelmed, scared, and confused. I don't understand it and I definitely cannot explain it, but I choose to trust you. That is all that matters at this moment. Right now, I like I don't have to be vulnerable out loud. I don't think I could be. I have never been vulnerable with—anyone. It's quite scary. We will both have to be patient with each other."* Without even waiting for me to respond, she turned back and started walking inside.