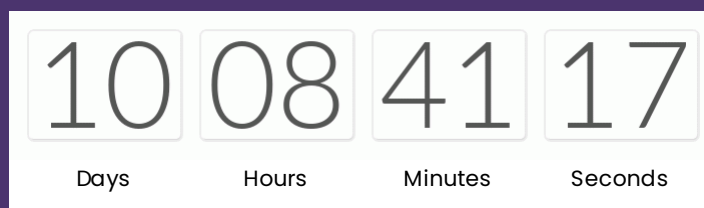




## Second Chance Summer is so close now ...



G'day

Welcome to the middle of May! I hope those of you who celebrated Mother's Day earlier this month had an enjoyable day. I spent the day with my hubby and our two boys enjoying a greasy burger down at the beach! The weather was spectacular. We were lucky enough to witness a young six-year-old girl with some mad skateboarding skills as she dropped into the bowl. You can watch her here >>> [Skateboarding Prodigy](#). You never know, she may just turn up in a future story!

I'm so excited that **Second Chance Summer** is close to being released. I can't wait for people to meet Cassia Phillips and get to know Toby a little better.

Early beta feedback was very positive. *Loving Summer* was a reasonably straightforward project for me and I decided to extend myself with this novel. I feel the storyline is possibly one that has been done before, but I've given it a unique twist that I hope readers really enjoy.

I do feel the need to warn prospective readers that there are some darker themes in this story. Therefore, I have included a trigger warning.

**Reader discretion recommended: This book touches on themes of violence against women and children.**

—ARC REVIEWERS WANTED—

WOULD YOU LIKE A FREE BOOK?

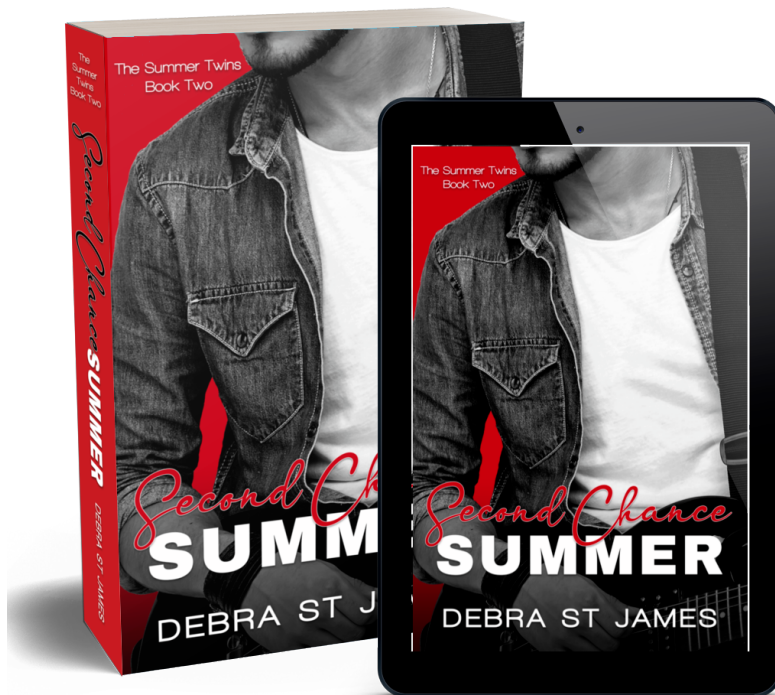
ARC = Advance Ready Copy

Authors often give out free electronic copies of their book *before* the official release date to receive early feedback of their work. The process benefits readers (because you get an electronic copy of the book for FREE before anyone else) and it helps the author (because hopefully, you'll feel the need to spread the word about how fabulous the book was and how much you enjoyed it).

If you would like a **free** copy of **Second Chance Summer** and you wouldn't mind leaving a review (not essential but would be greatly appreciated) on at least one of the platforms listed on the application form, then please click the link below to register your interest. *Spaces are limited.*

I'm hopeful that ARCs will be sent out no later than May 21, with any reviews to be posted as close to the release date of May 31 as possible.

**I would like to apply for an ARC**



## **Second Chance Summer**

**Available May 31**

**prologue**

senior year

[t]

Sitting at the table in the far corner of the cafeteria, to avoid notice, I watch Cassia walk in with her group of friends. They're all laughing and having a great time, something I generally find difficult to do in mixed company. I'm not sure why I'm like the way I am. I generally only feel comfortable around my family as well as some close friends (which are limited). Music takes a lot of space in my head—I tend to get lost in there quite a bit—which doesn't make for a good friend, in most people's opinion.

As usual, Cassia looks beautiful with her chestnut hair falling below her shoulders in soft waves. As she looks up, our eyes lock across the crowded room. Sounds cheesy, right, but it's the norm for us. I'm connected to her on some fundamental level I don't understand. I also find her incredibly hot. She just has to walk into the room, and my dick misbehaves, embarrassing me to the point where I have to escape being in her presence as soon as possible. I'm sure she thinks I hate her—with the way I always leave whenever she's around.

Cassia excuses herself from her friends, then walks toward me with a shy smile. Luckily, I'm sitting down, so she won't see my hard-on. Stopping in front of me, she tucks her silky hair behind her ear. "Hey, Toby."

"Uh, hi, Cassia. How's things?" I manage to sound somewhat put together, which is a bonus.

"Great. The girls and I were just talking about prom. You going?"

I wouldn't be caught dead going to prom. I don't want to see her dancing with that douche she dates on and off, Jake Simmons. I know Kate's going with Michael Fitzpatrick, who hangs out in the same group as Jake. I don't think Michael and Jake are best buds, but they *are* friends. I told Kate that I think she'd be better off going to prom with her girlfriends than with Michael. He seems like a dick to me.

"Nah, not my scene." I look down at the table because I don't want to see the pity in her graphite-colored eyes.

"Oh, that's disappointing. I was hoping we could share a dance."

My head snaps up to hers. "I thought you'd be going with Jake."

She shakes her head in the negative, swishing the long, silky waves around her shoulders. Her lips spread in a half-smile. "Nope. We broke up." She rolls her eyes. "Again."

She doesn't seem too upset about another break-up. I don't know what that guy's problem is. He's constantly breaking up with her, then chases her down after realizing his mistake, begging for forgiveness. If she were my girl, I'd never let her go.

Shane wanders toward us, coming in behind Cassia. He wiggles his eyebrows when he sees we're talking. He knows I have a crush on her, so he likes to take every opportunity to tease me about it. "Hey, guys. What's up?"

Cassia turns toward Shane with a genuine smile, one that lights up her whole face. "Oh, hi, Shane. We were just talking about prom. Toby's being a boohoo and not going. What about you? Are you going?" She looks hopeful.

He tucks his hands in his pockets, looking between the two of us. "Maybe. Not sure yet."

"It should be a fun night. You two should definitely come." She looks over her shoulder to acknowledge her friends who are calling her back to their table. "Anyway, I've gotta go. See ya in last period, Toby."

"Yeah, see ya around."

I watch her long legs carry her away from us, wishing I wasn't such a loser. Shane looks at me with raised eyebrows as he sits down. "You should definitely go to the prom. I hear Jake broke up with her again. This could be your chance, bro."

A large body moves in front of me. When I look up to see who's blocking my stellar view, I find Jake.

"Whatcha lookin' at, Emo Boy?" His beefy arms are crossed over his bulky chest. Just because he's the captain of our school football team, he thinks he rules the school. Actually, he *does* rule the school, and I hate him. I hate him because he has Cassia and doesn't treat her with the respect she deserves.

I don't even bother making eye contact with the jerk. "Nothin'."

"Good, keep it that way, Emo Boy. She's no one to you. Got it?" He snarls down his nose at me. Since I'm sitting while he's standing, he's pretty much towering over me like a giant brick wall.

"No problem." I'll say anything to get the guy out of my face. He seems satisfied with my answer, raps his knuckles on the table, and walks away to join his so-called friends. I'm pretty sure half the guys he hangs out with are only friends with him because it's safer for them. If you're not his friend, it leaves you open to being bullied by him.

"You should tell him to fuck off," Shane suggests, knowing I'll do nothing of the sort. "So, are you gonna go to prom?"

I doodle on my notebook that I always carry with me. "Nah. They'll probably get back together by then. It's not worth the hassle."

\*\*\*

The last period is music appreciation, my favorite class. Music centers me, quiets all the noise in my head, and allows me to be who I really am. My teacher, Mr. Hastings, pretty much lets me do my own thing, guiding me when I need it and leaving me alone when I don't. I also like the class because Cassia Phillips is in it—the only course we share. She is in no way musically inclined, only taking the class because her mom wanted her to take it. She wants her to be 'well rounded'. She plays the flute, which causes all sorts of issues with my dick as she purses her pouty lips to blow across the embouchure hole. She struggles to maintain the appropriate pressure, causing a lot of frustration on her part, while all I can think about is kissing her soft lips.

Since I'm not a chatty person, everyone pretty much leaves me alone, but Cassia always sits next to me during our music history session. "Hey again." She smiles at me, making my insides flip upside down.

Struggling to make eye contact with her, I look over her shoulder. "Yeah, hey." I sound like a douche. I get so damn nervous when she's around. For once, I wish I could be the cool kid.

"You ready to learn all about Dylan's crash and burn when he decided to use an electric guitar instead of his trusty acoustic at the Newport Folk Festival in

1965?"

I'm impressed that she's interested in Dylan. He's definitely one of my idols, and I aspire to be as famous as he is one day. I raise my eyes to hers. She's fidgeting ... biting her lip ... looking unsure. Raising an eyebrow, I nod slightly as one side of my mouth lifts to give her the approval I think she's looking for. She stops fidgeting then smiles back. "It should be an interesting discussion."

"Yeah, it'll be interesting to find out what everyone's views are on the matter. I, for one, think Dylan's music was great whether he played acoustic or electric guitar. It was all about the lyrics, the storytelling." I think it's the most number of words I've said to her, ever. The surprised look on her face supports this idea.

Mr. Hastings walks in, interrupting our bonding moment over Dylan.

[c]

I'm certain Toby hates me. Today was the most he's ever said to me, and it was only because we were talking about something close to his heart. Maybe that's the key? He usually only says a few words to me because I approach him to strike up a conversation. Otherwise, he would never speak to me. I love hearing the timbre of his voice when he talks—and when he sings, oh my gosh, so *good*—so I purposely go out of my way to chat with him. My friends always tease me because they know I have a huge crush on him. He makes my heart beat faster and my belly flip. Watching him work his guitar, I imagine the way his hands would feel on my body. Today, when he looked at me with his denim-colored eyes, I felt the breath in my lungs seize.

Maybe if I stopped going back to Jake, I'd have a chance with Toby. Probably not—he always seems to be in a hurry to get away from me, and I'm not sure why. I've repeatedly gone back over the years in my memory, trying to pinpoint if I ever did anything to him to make him dislike me, but I can't think of anything. Two thick arms wrap around my torso from behind, scaring the crap outta me. Looking over my shoulder, I put a face to the arms. Ugh, Jake. "Let me go, asshole."

"Now, that's no way to talk to your boyfriend." He squeezes me tighter with one arm while the other comes up to grab my boob, hard. "Ouch. Let me go."

"I'm never lettin' you go, Sia." Stupid idiot. This is what happens. He breaks up with me, and then he acts like nothing happened.

"You already did, remember." Wriggling free, I turn to face him. "You broke up with me because I didn't want to have sex with you on Friday night. Or did you forget?" He had a game on Saturday, so I'm sure he hooked up with someone else. Jake can't go without sex for more than two days at a time. He figures that if he breaks up with me before he hooks up with someone else, it doesn't count as cheating.

"Awww, you're upset. I didn't mean it. You know I never mean it." He pulls me into his body, snuggling down into my neck the way I love. He may be an idiot, but he can be so sweet to me. I like having a boyfriend; it makes me feel special as well as important to someone outside of my family. He pulls back, taking my school bag to carry before grasping my hand to lead me out to his car. Throwing my bag on the back seat, he pins me against the side of his car, kissing me with apology and sweetness. Pulling back, he looks into my eyes. "I'm sorry, Babe. I was stupid. Please forgive me."

As I'm about to forgive him, *again*, Toby passes by with Shane and Kate. Toby looks my way, and our eyes connect on a deeper level, as they always seem to. I'm sure I'm the only one who feels it, though, because he never seems affected. He doesn't stop, just keeps on walking, shaking his head ... *in disappointment*, maybe? I'm pretty sure him being disappointed that I'm with Jake is just wishful thinking on my part. Then he turns away down the sidewalk, exiting the school grounds without giving me another look. Looking back at Jake, I see the sincerity in his eyes, and I know he'll spend the rest of this week making it up to me.

I put on my sternest voice. "I forgive you. But this is the last time, Jake. I mean it."

He moves forward again, taking my mouth in a hard kiss filled with relief. He doesn't mean what he says and does half the time. He doesn't think things through, and he can be a spoiled brat when he doesn't get his way. Friday night was like a toddler tantrum. He wasn't getting his way, so he wanted to hurt me by breaking up with me. I'm certain he's learned his lesson this time.

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 **Book Booty**



## Written in the Beat

Available for Preorder | Release date: May 21

Hearts and music both have one thing in common...their .

### *Charlie*

Dancing has been my dream—and my sanctuary—since I was three years old. After spending the last year recovering from an injury, I'm at a crossroads. I have no idea what comes next...or who.

### *Jax*

Turns out, life in the fast lane isn't all it's cracked up to be. As one of the hottest up-and-coming singers in the music scene, all my dreams are starting to come true. Until I walk into a room where an angel dances before my eyes. Now my world—and my dreams—are turning upside down...again.

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**How did my life end up like a late 1990's movie...**

**...Runaway Bride meets sexy billionaire**

My plan was simple

- ♥ Escape to a private island.
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- ♥ Forget about my cheating ex.

What I didn't count on...

...was the appearance of the island's owner and his sexy verbal sparring skills.

Find out what happens when a reservation mix-up has these two stuck together on a remote island.

**One-Click!**





## Review Opportunity

*Kate Smith is looking for interested readers to review her book,  
Between You, Me & Us*

*What are the rules for dating a widower, anyway?*

When Amara sees her ex-boyfriend, Jake, at a wedding, she finds him as irresistible as she remembers. She's drawn to him, but picking up where they left off four years ago becomes a minefield of sizzling chemistry, painful memories, and difficult realities. All is not what it seems with this slightly untethered, still-reeling widower.

They've been here before, and she wonders where, or if, she fits into his life. Is she an over-analytical hot mess, or is there something bigger behind Jake's hesitation? Amara must decide if she can accept a not-quite-perfect future with Jake, or will she bolt, possibly repeating the worst mistake of her life?

**I would like to review *Between You Me & Us***

## Much Love and Happy Reading ...





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