

# FINDING ANDY

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ANDY

“You're fucking crazy!”

The air streams through my hair, throwing the long blue strands across my face as I throw my body over the cliff, laughter tumbling out at the horrified expressions of the group of people watching. Tourists, like me. They say they want adventure, to discover, but then they still hold themselves back. Still worry, still fear. Not me. I know life can change in an instant, and I plan on enjoying every last second I have in this amazing world.

The feeling of falling is incredible, the unknown lying below me. I close my eyes and let the air carry me. A smile twists my lips, as moments like this are when I feel the most alive. It's not the thrill, but the idea of living life to the max. Of trying new things, seeing new places. Really living. Ok, so it might be a bit because of the thrill. When you spend so long feeling dead, this is as good as it gets.

I twist midair and hit the water in a dive, letting it envelop me, letting everything else disappear as the calm blue cocoons me. Fish swim happily past, uncaring about my intrusion. I've always been fascinated that below something as simple as water, a whole other world exists. One that most people ignore or forget. When water covers over seventy percent of Earth, why would you want to spend all your time on land?

Only when my lungs scream do I resurface with a grin. I turn so I am floating on my back and from here I can see the cliff. A huge, towering thing that from this angle

looks like it is touching the sky. I can see the trees, animals, ground; all of it making me grateful to be alive. After my whole world stopped turning and everything fell apart, I promised myself that I would see as much as I could, and I am making good on that promise. I wasn't always like this, I was content to follow a plan for what my life should be like. Everything set out in front of me, education, marriage, and family. All it took was my whole world crumbling around me for me to realise I wanted more.

The cold water parts for me as I swim to the edge of the lake where a rocky shore waits. Dragging myself out of the water, I look at my watch. Damn, time to go. Seems my little side trip is over if I want to get checked in before everyone disappears for the weekend. I throw the lake one last look, a goodbye of sorts, before I hurry up the winding path back to where my clothes are. I ignore the looks from the other tourists, who now stare at me like I'm crazy.

*Boring bastards.*

I towel off and pull on my shorts and crop top. Grabbing my Polaroid camera, I snap a picture and shake it while I look at the beauty of nature. Throwing my spectators a wink, I grab my stuff and hurry back down the path to my car.

The drive through the green countryside is beautiful, the fields and flowers shining in the afternoon sun. It looks like one of those adverts you always see on TV, but I can smell the fresh clean air, hear the birds singing, almost feel the grass under my feet.

The place I'm staying tonight is in the middle of nowhere. I heard about it from a girl I met on a mountain I was climbing. Apparently, it's a secluded village; a secret, and hard to get to. Cabins line a picturesque lake, one that you can walk right out to, offering

its guests an uninterrupted view of nature. Then, at night, it changes to a party village, with themed bars, games, and a water slide down the one road in the town.

As soon as I climbed back down from the mountain, I jumped in my beat up Range Rover and set off through the idyllic countryside towards the secret village. You can't blame me for seeing the cliff diving and getting distracted along the way.

I drive past a quaint little farming village, reminding me of back home. I haven't been back since everything went down, almost a year ago. I keep myself moving from one adventure to the next. I am like a drug addict seeking my next fix. In my case, it's discovering new places, cultures, and things normal people only dream about. Screw going to Disneyland, I'd rather go to the places that normal tourists don't.

The fields on either side soon turn into great big towering trees, the branches meeting over the road, creating a canopy. It's supposed to be hard to get to, and once there, even harder to leave. No phone signal, Wi-Fi, not even TV. Just you and the adventures you can have.

I drive for another hour before my radio fades from some pop song into static. I flick it off and wind down my window, letting the sounds of nature soothe me as I drive.

I keep the handwritten instructions next to me, glancing at them every now and again. I make so many turns that even with a map I would be lost. Eventually, a wooden sign pops up in front of me.

*"Welcome to Nowhere. Adventurers, travelers and seekers welcome."*

Grinning, I pull over to the side where at least twenty other cars are parked. Looks like I am walking from here. I turn off the engine and grab my bag from the back seat. I don't bother bringing my phone, switching it off and leaving it in the glove box.

Locking the car, I turn to the forest where a small dirt trail parts the trees and leads to the village. Hoisting my bag on my shoulder, I set off in search of my next fix.

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The music from the bar drifts through the closed wooden door making my heart beat in time to the rhythm. I can almost taste the heightened emotions of its occupants. The two-hour hike here was amazing, through streams and over ravines; it was an adventure in itself. Once I got here, I fell in love.

The atmosphere, the people. It was like turning back time, no one talking on their phone as they walk, no sounds of late night TV or people distracted by technology, ignoring life. Instead, groups of people laughed and joked as they set off into the forest or just simply enjoyed being with each other. As I checked into my room for the night, the eccentric man checking me in informed me that they always have room here for more like-minded people. I ended up with a cabin set five minutes into the forest. With nothing but nature surrounding me, it is peaceful. The peace quickly got boring though. I am not one of those people who feels the need to be with someone all the time, but I do prefer to keep moving, keep living.

Otherwise, what separates us from the dead? Is it the job we do, the family we have or the emotions racing through our veins? I never quite fit the mould. I didn't dream of stability and a family and a house. I dreamed of adventure, of love, and laughter. I don't want to be another sheep, living mindlessly when there's so much out there to experience. It's my dream, my life, and it will probably be my downfall.

Smiling to myself at the night to come, I push open the door to the bar and take in the sights. Wooden tables are scattered throughout, with an old jukebox flashing pink and orange in one corner, blasting out Elvis Presley. Darts, pool, air hockey, and more games are dotted around the room. A long wooden bar runs the whole right-hand side of the room, with a woman and a man working tirelessly to fill the orders of the people waiting for drinks. Huge wooden beams line the edges, from ceiling to floor. It reminds me of a ski resort I went to a couple of months ago.

There are so many different types of people filling the room, but we are all looking for one thing. An escape. A businessman sits in the corner, nursing a beer as he people watches. A group of young girls are playing pool, flirting with some men. There's an older woman sitting by herself, singing along to the music. My eyes land on *them* next.

Three men are sitting in the corner. Their clothes are plain and boring and they are hidden in the darkest part of the room, but something about them holds my stare. If they don't want to be seen, why come to a place like this? They must be looking for something. They whisper amongst themselves, barely touching the drinks in front of them, their eyes not staying on one thing for too long. Until all three sets lock on me.

It's like an electric shock to my system. Some might call it the hand of God. I call it destiny. Something in me knows this is why I am here. Looking into their eyes, I know they are my next adventure.

Those men are going to be my biggest hit yet. One look in their eyes and I know I will never be the same, not even my wildest stories will compare with the adventure they

don't know is waiting for them. But my life doesn't involve forever, only now. They will think they can tame me, seduce me, and play me. They will have no idea what hit them.

Their eyes are cold, and warn me not to bother approaching, but I can see the longing and confusion there, too. They don't want to want me. They want to exist, I am going to show them how to live. Striding across the room, I ignore everyone else.

“Dance with me,” I say when I get to their table.

The one on the left leans back in his chair, his thick brown beard and brown hair blending together. His face is handsome, with piercing blue eyes that you can't help but fall into. A silver nose ring catches in the light as he watches me curiously.

The one in the middle has deep grey eyes, short blonde hair and full, kissable lips. He looks like a businessman, all clean lines and attitude. Oh, and sexy as hell.

The last one is the most striking, not that the others aren't, but he is too handsome to be real. Emerald eyes, short styled black hair, with a sharp jawline and cheekbones. He's clean-cut, not as much as the second guy, and looks somewhere between a model and a Greek God.

They all look completely different, but they have one thing in common. Their eyes are colder than the Antarctic. Unfriendly, unwelcoming, yet I don't back away.

“Which one of us was that meant for, Blue?” Says the blonde haired one.

“All of you.”