

LIVING WILL

Written by

20-DE08-W45

A grief-stricken woman finds strength and hope as she follows a trail of sticky notes written by her 6-year-old son.

INT. BEDROOM - MORNING

A dark, modest bedroom. Closet and long dresser near the back. Shades drawn.

Sharp rap on the door.

The covers on the bed wrestle themselves to birth TWYLA, late 20's, cute, perky optimism now saddled by disheveled grief.

A child's voice, age 6, giggles.

TWYLA

Will? Will Junior, that you?

A note shoops under the door.

Twyla adjusts her dark sheer slip in a modesty check.

Rubs tear-smudged eyes to coax them open.

Shuffles to the door. Plucks up the crease-riddled paper from the floor. From outside:

WILL (O.S.)

Let's be fun Mommy!

Tilts a tattered corner to catch the ray of morning sun that slips around the drawn shade. On the paper she scans:

A child's drawing of Mommy in a dress with a big heart in the middle of her chest.

Child scribble up the side reads: COM FOR TREZR HUNT.

Twyla shuffles to a mirrored closet door. Pulls the cord to the lightbulb.

Shrinks back from the impact of bright light that is sure to melt her.

Notices her reflection cowering behind an outstretched hand.

Twyla rolls her wrist around for inspection.

Then offers both her wrists to the mirror--

INT. BEDROOM - PAST

Same bedroom in front of the same mirror, but fully lit.

Twyla clasps on a locket and adjusts her cocktail dress, as WILL SR., a rugged 20's, stands next to her. He's losing a battle to his tie.

WILL SR.

Tie: 1. Will: 0.

Twyla slides in to fix the tie,...

TWLYA

Win-win scenario for me.

...Then tops it off with a kiss.

A precocious WILL, age 6, bounds in. Mischievous eyes behind a good-natured smile.

WILL

Mommy Mommy!

He presents his sketch with the pride of a master.

WILL (CONT'D)

I made this for you.

Twyla inspects the work of Fine Art.

It is a drawing of Mommy, Daddy and son holding hands under a bright yellow sun. Child block print reads: I LOVE YOU!

Will turns pensive at their dress-up clothes.

WILL (CONT'D)

Don't go!!!

Dad kneels to level with him:

WILL SR.

Son, even when we're gone, the people you love can always be found... right here--

Taps Will Jr's heart with his fingers.

INT. BEDROOM - PRESENT

Twyla snaps to, back in front of the mirror.

Rolls open the closet door.

Riffles through her hanging dresses. Lands on the one she wore that night.

Plunges through it to pull out a pair of grey sweats.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - MINUTES LATER

Twyla, in sweats, pokes her head out the bedroom. She's fixed her hair and applied basic makeup.

Catches sight of a wrinkled lime green sticky note posted opposite her, on a large wedding photo. The photo captures them just after a kiss. She's ruffling her husband's hair.

Plucks the sticky note off to read: YOU WIL LOVE YOUR TREZR!

Twyla steadies herself with a hand on the chest of her pictured husband.

TWLYA

I'm sorry Will. I can't do this today.

Looks up into his eyes. Pounds his chest with the hand holding the note.

TWLYA

I just... can't.

Discovers the reverse side of the note is a child's drawing of a smiley face and the words: ITS ME!

Twyla rubs her thumb along the dirt-layered tacky glue.

WILL (O.S.)

You can do it Mommy!

A breeze rustles a row of sticky notes. All arrows lead her further down the hallway.

INT. WILL'S ROOM

Hanging from the open door knob, a gleaming locket calls her.

Pops it open to see a smiling picture of Will.

Twyla runs a finger along the edge of the locket until she reaches the opposite picture of Will Sr.

Snaps the locket shut.

Drapes the necklace over her head and slips into the room.

Collects the sticky note on the dresser. A big red circle with a slash through it and the words: NOT HEER.

Scans the room with a heavy sigh. Her eyes land on a well-worn stuffed bear.

WILL (O.S.)  
You can take BeeBuzz if you get  
scared.

Twyla grabs the bear and dashes out the door after the voice.

INT. STAIRS

A masking tape arrow points her downstairs. A shadow flashes at the bottom of the stairs as Will's giggles retreat.

Twyla scurries down, but halts after three steps.

Sits next to a bowl of mini candy bars.

Rummages through the bowl. Laughs as she draws out an open and half-eaten chocolate bar.

Turns the wrapper inside-out to read the message scrawled on it: FOR INKASE YOUR HUNGREE.

She continues down the stairs.

INT. BOTTOM OF STAIRS

Twyla comes to a dead standstill. Rain patters on the window she stands before...

INT. CAR - PAST

Heavy rain pounds a car windshield. Headlights barely dent the grey world outside.

Twyla drives. Looks over to the passenger seat.

Smiles as Will Sr., locked in a serious debate, turns to the backseat to refute his tiny opponent.

WILL SR.  
Trust me, heaven IS big enough for  
all of us.

Twyla glances up into the rearview mirror to see Will, feet dangling from his booster seat, pondering his rebuttal.

His eyes shoot up to meet hers.

WILL  
 Mommy--!

Headlights fill the windshield. A long honk--

INT. BOTTOM OF STAIRS - PRESENT

Twyla shudders. Retreats back up a step.

WILL (O.S.)  
 --You're almost there.

Twyla catches her breath.

Gingerly tiptoes to the kitchen door. Smoke wafts out from inside.

A tentative:

TWYLA  
 Will?

INT. KITCHEN

Peers in. Not yet ready to commit to entering the smoky room.

Catches a glimpse of knees tucking under the table.

On the table: orange juice, a plate of eggs and burnt bacon. But Twyla's eyes shine on the drawing next to them.

She takes a step in toward:

The same I LOVE YOU drawing from her memory, though slightly faded. Mommy, Daddy and child under a bright yellow sun.

WILL SR. WILL JR.(O.S.)  
 You did it! You did it!

Will Sr. crawls out from under the table with a goofy grin.

WILL SR. (CONT'D)  
 Pretty sure the bacon's a lost cause. But the company here is palatable.

Twyla begins sinking out the door.

Her husband snags her before she disappears. Pulls her into the room and into a full embrace.

He tightens his hold on her.

WILL SR. (CONT'D)  
Have faith.

She squeezes him harder.

TWYLA  
How much longer you keeping this  
up?

WILL SR.  
Every day. Until you come to me  
yourself.

Twyla lets the notes fall from her hand.

Tears stream down her face.

TWYLA  
Tomorrow...

Her eyes land on the sunshine in the child's drawing.

TWYLA (CONT'D)  
Tomorrow.

They crumble into the embrace. Hold onto each other, rocking  
back and forth.