

# *Free Sample*



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# Synopsis

***A tale of two hearts united by faith, challenged by circumstance, and ultimately triumphant through the grace of God.***

***Divine Detours*** is a heartwarming Christian romance that follows the lives of Chloe and Cyrus as they navigate the complexities of love, faith, and family. Their story begins with a chance encounter at a church festival, where an immediate connection sparks between them. However, their budding relationship faces significant challenges, particularly from Cyrus' disapproving mother, who believes Chloe isn't suitable for her son.

As Chloe and Cyrus grow closer, they must confront personal insecurities, family expectations, and the test of their faith. Their journey is marked by moments of doubt and separation, including a painful period where Cyrus briefly considers another relationship at his mother's urging. Through prayer, honesty, perseverance, and the support of their church community, they find their way back to each other, their love stronger for having weathered the storm.

Chloe and Cyrus's story exemplifies the power of faith, forgiveness, and unconditional love throughout their journey. Chloe's relationship with Cyrus' mother gradually improves, showcasing the healing power of time and understanding. As they face life's ups and downs together, their unwavering faith and love for each other continue to be the cornerstone of their family, inspiring those around them with their commitment to God and each other.

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***Divine Detours*** illustrates a profound truth: the Christian love story is not always "peaches and cream." There may be times when a couple questions whether their union is truly part of God's plan. However, with prayer, faith, and belief in an all-knowing God, the relationship can indeed conquer all when love is rooted in God.

*"And we know that in all things, God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose."*

**Romans 8:28**

## Chapter One: A Spark of Hope



The gentle hum of conversation filled the air as Chloe stepped into the immense church hall. Her heart pounded with a mixture of anticipation and dread. The annual Fall Festival was in full swing, with cheerful decorations adorning every corner and the aroma of pumpkin spice wafting through the room. She smoothed down her pin-striped dress, took a deep breath, and plastered on a smile that she hoped didn't betray her inner turmoil.

Chloe's best friend and fellow choir member, Sarah, shouted across the room. "Chloe! You made it!" Sarah rushed over to give her a warm hug. Her enthusiasm was infectious, helping to melt away some of Chloe's tension.

"I wouldn't miss this for the world!" Chloe replied, trying to match Sarah's excitement. In truth, Chloe had contemplated staying home, curled up with a good book by Bestselling Author Marlowe R. Scott and a cup of tea, but she knew that isolation wasn't the answer. It had been six months since Mark had walked out of her life, leaving her with a shattered heart and wavering faith. The church community had been her lifeline during those dark days, and she owed it to them—and to herself—to keep showing up.

Sarah looped her arm through Chloe's and guided her towards the refreshment table. "Come on. Let's get you some of Ms. Holden's famous apple cider. It'll warm you right on up!"

As they weaved through the crowd, Chloe couldn't help but notice the many couples in attendance. They held hands, laughed as they shared private jokes, and radiated genuine contentment. A familiar ache bloomed in her chest, prompting her to silently pray for strength to make it through the day.

*'Lord, help me find joy in Your presence, even when my heart feels so empty.'*

"Here you go, dear," Ms. Holden said as she handed Chloe a steaming cup of cider. Her kind eyes crinkled at the corners as she smiled. "It's good to see you here, Chloe. We've missed your beautiful voice in the choir."

Chloe felt a pang of guilt. "Thank you, Ms. Holden. I've missed singing, too. I promise I'll be back soon." As she turned away from the table, sipping the warm, spicy cider, she collided with a tall, solid form. The cup slipped from her grasp, but not before its contents splashed across a crisp white shirt. "Oh, no! I'm so sorry!" she exclaimed, mortified. She quickly grabbed a handful of napkins from the table and dabbed at the growing light brown stain. Her cheeks burned with embarrassment.

Hey, no worries," replied a deep, gentle voice. "I'd say this shirt desperately needed some fall-themed tie-dye anyway, wouldn't you agree?"

When Chloe finally looked up, her eyes met a pair of kind brown eyes that crinkled at the corners with amusement. The man before her was tall, with curly black hair and a warm smile that made her heart skip a beat. She

quickly pushed that feeling aside, reminding herself of the wall she'd so carefully constructed.

"I'm Cyrus," he said, extending his right hand. "And you are?"

"Chloe," she replied, shaking his hand briefly before stepping back. "I'm truly sorry about your shirt. Please, let me pay for the dry cleaning."

Cyrus waved off the offer with a chuckle. "Don't worry about it. Consider it my contribution to making this event more exciting. Besides, I now have an excuse to go home and change into something more comfortable. It seems I'm a bit overdressed for this occasion."

Chloe couldn't help but smile at his easy-going nature. It was refreshing but also terrifying. She knew all too well from the past how a man's charm could mask ulterior motives.

"So, Chloe," Cyrus continued, totally oblivious to her internal struggle, "are you a regular here at Tabernacle Baptist?"

She nodded in the affirmative, grateful for the quick shift in conversation. "Yes, I've been attending for about five years now. I'm usually in the choir, but I've been... taking a break lately."

Something in her tone must have given her away because Cyrus' expression softened. "Sometimes, we all need a little break to recharge our batteries. I'm sure your voice is missed, though."

Before she could respond, Pastor Merchant's voice boomed through the hall, calling everyone's attention. "Welcome, everyone, to our annual Fall Festival! Let's gather around and give thanks for this wonderful community and the blessings of the season."



As people started moving towards the center of the room, Chloe saw an opportunity to escape. “I should go find my friend,” she said, already backing away from Cyrus. “Again, I’m sorry about your shirt.”

“Wait!” Cyrus called out, causing her to pause. “Would you like to join me for the blessing? It would be nice to have a friendly face nearby.”

She hesitated, torn between her instinct to retreat and the genuine warmth in Cyrus’ eyes.

*‘Lord, give me wisdom,’* she prayed silently.

After a moment, she replied, “Okay. Sure.”

As they made their way through the crowd, she couldn’t help but notice how Cyrus seemed to radiate a sense of peace. It was both comforting and unsettling, stirring feelings she had long since buried.

Pastor Merchant led the congregants in a heartfelt prayer, thanking God for the changing seasons and the constant love that sustains through life’s ups and downs. His words struck a chord within Chloe, and tears formed in the corners of her eyes.

“Are you okay?” Cyrus whispered. His concern was evident.

She nodded, quickly wiping away a stray tear. “Yes, just... moved by the prayer.”

As the crowd dispersed, Cyrus turned to face her fully. “Chloe, I hope this isn’t too forward, but I’d love to get to know you better. Would you like to grab a coffee sometime this week?”

Her heart raced as fear and excitement warred within. “I... I... I don’t know,” she stammered. “I’m not really in a good place for... that sort of thing right now.”

Cyrus’ expression remained gentle and understanding. “I understand. How about this: Why don’t we start as friends? No pressure. Just two people getting to know each other over a cup of coffee. And, if you’re not comfortable, we can stick to chatting at church events. What do you say?”

She took a deep breath, taking his offer into consideration. Part of her wanted to run to protect herself from the possibility of more pain. The other part—a voice that sounded suspiciously like hope—urged her to take a chance. “Okay,” she finally said. “Friends. Coffee. I think I can manage that.”

Cyrus’ face lit up with a broad smile that seemed to brighten the entire room. “Wonderful! How about Wednesday afternoon at The Cozy Corner Café?”

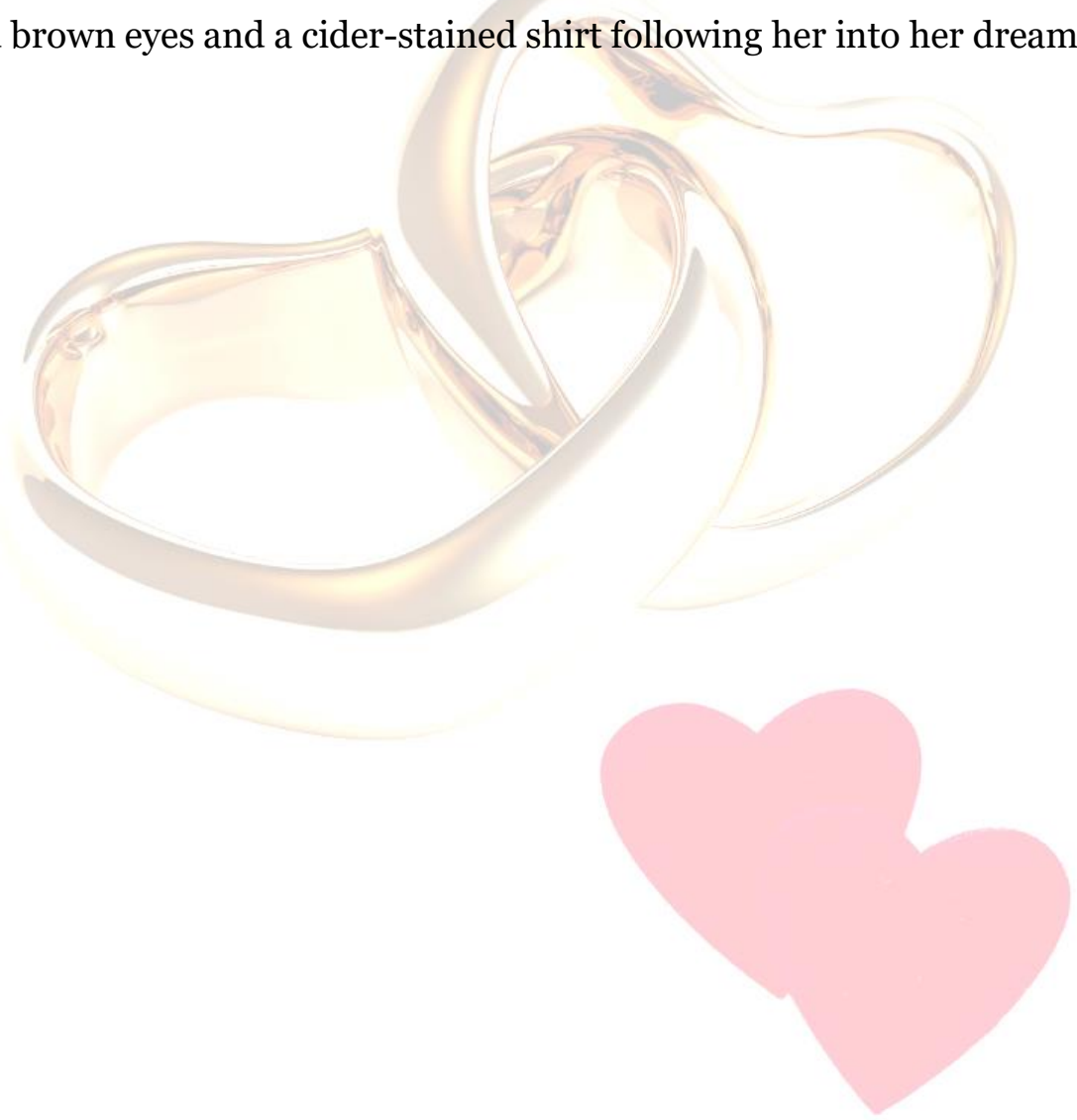
Chloe nodded in agreement, feeling a flutter of something she hadn’t experienced in months: anticipation. It was small... barely a whisper in the face of her fears—but it was there. They quickly exchanged telephone numbers, with Cyrus stating he would call on Monday to schedule their friend date before parting ways.

Later that night, as she knelt by the bed for her evening prayer, she poured out her heart to God.

*“Lord, You know the pain I’ve carried. You know the doubts that have plagued me. I don’t understand Your plan, but I trust You are with me. Please give me the strength to open my heart again and see the blessings*

*You have placed in my life. And if Cyrus is meant to be a part of that, help me to be brave enough to find out. Amen.”*

As she climbed into bed, she felt a sense of peace wash over her. She didn't know what the future held, but for the first time in a long while, she was curious to find out. With a small smile, she closed her eyes—the memory of kind brown eyes and a cider-stained shirt following her into her dreams.





# *End of Sample*

I pray you enjoyed this short read.

You are invited to pre-order the Kindle version for **ONLY \$1.25**. Be among the *FIRST* to grab Chloe and Cyrus' *thrilling* love story! The official release date is February 12, 2025.

Details and more can be found at

<https://www.amazon.com/dp/B0DR3HJTDI>

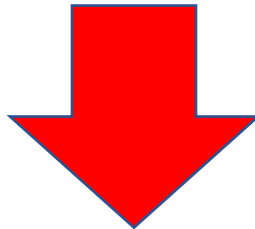
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