A Day in the Life

by Genuinelies

Summary

A brief look into the beginning of Will and Nico's relationship…

Notes

I really don't have a good feel for Will Solace's personality or his and Nico's relationship (platonic or otherwise) since BOO hasn't come out yet, so this might be super OOC.

…I needed a solangelo fix, so…ficlet!

“You are my sunshine, my only sunshine…you make me happy when skies are grey!”

Jason was halfway done his morning routine when the sound of admittedly pleasant singing filtered in from outside. Curious, he cracked the door of his cabin and looked around the grounds for the source.

And immediately backpeddled into his room and shimmied into his pants. He was out the door and running across Camp Half Blood a moment later.

The crowd around Cabin 13 was only growing.
A stone was sinking down Jason’s throat into his stomach. He was going to make whoever was hassling Nico rethink his life choices. His hands fist at his sides, but when he was close enough to see over the heads of the other campers he paused.

Will Solace was strumming away on his guitar as he finished up his serenade with a beautiful flourish.

Gathering his wits, Jason shoved his way past the other campers, who had started tittering amongst each other. They parted like he’d called down a lightning bolt as they realized who was shoving. None of his friends were there, likely because they were still enjoying being able to sleep in and not worry about the fate of the world after their ordeal with Gaea.

He placed a hand on Will’s shoulder. “What’s going on here?”

The other counselor didn’t even flinch, giving Jason a rueful smile. His eyes were serious above the spattering of freckles on his cheeks. “Thought Nico could use some cheering up.”

“Solace, if you’re picking on-”

“Excuse you, but my intentions are pure, I promise!” Will looked offended. He shrugged off his hand. The other blond was tall, and he drew himself up to give Jason a concerned but warning look. “I don’t see how this is any of your business, either.”

Jason blinked at him. Did that really mean what it sounded like it meant? “You realize that he’s probably not even in there? That was enough to send him into the underworld for the next twenty years.”

Will grinned. “It's good for him.”

Jason frowned.

“Really. He needs to stop hiding,” Will said. He shot a look back at Cabin 13, and there was just enough worry in the son of Apollo’s glance that Jason relaxed, just slightly.

“I’m being serious,” Jason frowned harder. “You really might have scared him off for good. He was finally doing better here with people.”

“Then I assure you I’ll be making a trip to drag his bum back to camp,” Will frowned back.

“You’d go to the underworld?” Jason was taken aback.

“Sure. If it’s necessary.” Will shrugged as if it wasn’t any big deal. “I told you, this is good for him.”

Jason gave him a disbelieving look. “I don’t think he deserves you.” He didn’t particularly mean it as a compliment.

“Oh, he definitely does,” Will rejoined cheerfully. He kept shooting glances toward Nico’s closed door, though, and finally Jason relented.

He leaned in. “He’s been through a lot. If you do anything to hurt him…” He kept his voice low so the other campers wouldn’t hear.

“Why, I do think you’re jealous, Jason Grace.” Will responded impishly.

That gave Jason a bit of pause. Was he? Maybe. He had kind of hoped to befriend the son of
Hades now that life had calmed down again. He wasn’t sure how Nico would handle having two people trying to get closer to him at the same time. Besides that, he had kept to himself again after his big confession to Percy. Whatever confidence he’d found had seemed fleeting.

He shook it off. “You’re right,” he deadpanned. “Piper has never serenaded me.”

Will chuckled and slung his guitar on its strap across his shoulders, and together they shooed the onlookers away, the show over.

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Later, when Will was sure Jason was off with Piper, Percy and Annabeth, he returned to check on Nico. While he was absolutely sure it was what the reclusive and brooding son of Hades needed, someone to shake him up and bring him out of his shell, willing or not, he wasn’t sure Jason was wrong with his guess about Nico’s reaction.

He rapped gently with his knuckles on the door to Cabin 13. “Nico? Mind if I come in?”

Will held his breath and couldn’t remember the last time he’d felt so unsure about how another person felt about him. He was determined not to let that affect his actions, but it was more of a struggle than he wanted to admit.

Finally he tried the handle, and was surprised when it opened easily.

His mood did a nosedive when he realized that he was staring at an empty cabin, one foot inside. The bathroom door was even open.

Valiantly, he tried one more time. “Nico? Are you in here?”

“No.” This came from behind him.

Will may or may not have hit his head sideways on the door frame. He rubbed his head sheepishly.

Nico was looking at him with a perplexed expression, but Will was relieved that it wasn’t angry. Since his confession to Percy, a lot of the characteristic tension had left the smaller demigod’s wiry frame. Which still left him with more than your average person, but baby steps.

“What are you doing here, Will?”

“I came to check up on you after this morning,” Will answered honestly.

“This morning?” Nico echoed.

Will climbed down the steps so he wouldn’t tower quite so much over him.

“I was with Chiron all day,” Nico explained. “What happened this morning?”

“Ha,” Will barked. “Well, that’s embarrassing.”

Nico’s eyes began to narrow. Will put a reassuring hand on his shoulder, and smiled when Nico didn’t cringe.

A reassuring hand…for him. He needed to make sure Nico didn’t run. “You might hear some tales later,” he admitted.

“Will…what happened this morning?”
“It was much better with a guitar,” Will cautioned. He met Nico’s dark eyes. They were still underscored with dark rings, and he was still too pale to be entirely healthy, but Will loved the kindness he could see hidden behind Nico’s defenses.

He cleared his throat, then reprised the first line of the serenade from that morning. “That might have happened. Though I’m not sure your cabin appreciated it. Kind of a hard audience.”

Nico’s eyes widened. “What does you singing to me have to do with this morning?”

“Don’t you dare run,” Will turned serious.

Nico paled even further. “Oh gods, you didn’t…”

“Sorry,” Will said, and he meant the apology.

“And you just admitted to it?” Nico asked incredulously. “Why would you tell me you just… did anyone see?” Mortification seeped across his features. His eyes darted to either side and he tried to disengage himself from Will’s grip. “Why would you do that?”

The shadows began to creep in. A few campers across the grounds shot them interested looks.

“You’re causing a scene,” Will murmured. “I don’t mind if people see us, but if you do you’d better stop.”

The shadows dissipated. The grass was wilting around them, but there was no help for that.

“How many people saw?” Nico asked a little desperately.

“There was a crowd,” Although he kept his easy demeanor, trying to remain calm for Nico’s sake, he might have misjudged how ready Nico was for public declarations of affection.

Tough love, he reminded himself.

Will grabbed his other shoulder, holding Nico’s frame still so the panicking demigod had to meet his eyes.

“I can’t take it back,” Will said. “I’m sorry. I just wanted to show you that it’s okay not to hide when you like someone.”

Nico froze. “What?”

“It’s not fun to put yourself out there and get rejected, but it’s not the end of the world. And I know you know that or you wouldn’t have been able to tell Percy what you did. Which was brave, by the way.” Will ran a hand through his hair. “I just felt like I should be honest with you.” He let his hand drop by his sides. He didn’t want to make the other guy feel trapped.

“I trust you,” Nico said slowly. He still looked taken aback. “So I don’t think you’d mock me.”

Will tamped down a nervous laugh in his throat. “Definitely not.”

There was a slight tremor to Nico’s shoulders and Will suddenly realized he might have overestimated Nico’s inner confidence.

But then Nico’s mouth firmed up. “This still isn’t good.”

“You can’t keep hiding away…”
“And you can’t tell me what to do. Or how to deal with my own…my own feelings.” Nico breathed out. “I don’t like public scenes.”

Will nodded, slowly. “I’m sorry, Nico. I am. I misjudged—”

“You can’t treat me like I’m ever going to be like you. I’m not.”

“You shouldn’t be so worried about what everyone thinks.” Will looked back at him, concerned. “You’ve spent the entire time you’ve been here telling me how no one will accept you. While I don’t think that’s true, if you do then what do you have to lose? The people you don’t think you’re friends with anyway?”

Nico blinked at him. His bemusement softened his harsh expression.

“You’re either going to admit you want to be friends with everyone here or that you really don’t care, and can stop being angry with me.”

He swore to the gods the recalcitrant demigod’s lips twitched as if he were about to smile. Then he sighed. “You know what your problem is, Will Solace? You’re a healer. You want to save everyone. But some of us can’t be saved.”

“You know, some people other than you have feelings too,” Will rejoined crossly. “You’re leaving me here waiting on eggshells.”

Something in Nico’s eyes hardened. “Fine. I’m calling your bluff.”

Suddenly Nico fisted his hands into the orange fabric of Will’s t-shirt, yanking him forward and down. His lips found Will’s, and the son of Apollo closed his eyes, gratefully returning the kiss. But he was off-balance, so he couldn’t really hug Nico back the way he wanted to and ended up flailing.

Nico stepped away from him a moment later. “So.” He was blushing a deep rose and avoiding eye contact. Yards away, some passing campers were staring openmouthed at them. “There. You’re right. I shouldn’t be afraid of anyone else. But you don’t have to go through with this just because you think it’d be good for me. I appreciate what you’re trying to do.”

The son of Hades might as well have been a doppleganger of the tortured, half-dead guy who’d brought the Athena Parthenos to camp less than a month before. Will’s heart swelled. He knew he’d had some part in that.

“Did you just kiss me because you wanted to, or because you’re so stubborn you wanted to prove me wrong?” Will asked gently.

Nico looked at him in disbelief, as if he was waking up from a nap. “Holy Hades, you were serious.” His eyes began widening and Will bought a clue just in time to grab his hand before the shadows melted around them.

He was dreading seeing the underworld when they ended up back in the world, and was relieved when it was just the inside of Nico’s cabin. The other demigod had begun pacing, his breathing loud enough for Will to hear.

“You’re having a panic attack,” Will cautioned. “You should sit down and breathe…”

“You were serious,” Nico repeated.
Will caught his hand again and tugged him into an enveloping hug.

Then smiled, as he felt Nico’s steel-like frame slowly relax. Cautious arms came up and rose around Will’s waist.

“I take it this means you like me too,” Will joked hopefully.

But Nico was shaking his head and then pushing him away. “I’m sorry. I’m so sorry.” He moved backward until there were feet between them. The look on his face belied his words, like someone was dying. He averted his gaze. “Please – please leave. I’m sorry.”

“But Nico—”

Nico walked over to the door and opened it, still looking at the floor.

Flabbergasted, Will tried one last time to meet Nico’s eyes, and left when he failed.

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Nico was too jittery to even shadow-travel, or he would have been across the world from Camp Half-Blood by that point. Instead he had to settle for collapsing on his bed, trying to get his breath under control.

What had even just happened?

Will confessed feelings for him?

Nico kissed him…in public?

Will had…what did he even say? He’d serenaded his cabin this morning? Nico slapped a hand over his face.

But Will had had a point. If the others were never going to accept him…then why not just be himself?

His hand drifted down to his lips.

That had felt way better than he had imagined, and what he’d imagined had been pretty good to start with. Will Solace knew how to kiss. He also knew how to hug. Nico couldn’t remember the last time he’d felt so comforted by an embrace.

Which is why he couldn’t let this happen.

It would hurt way too much when it ended. It already hurt. Give it a week, when Nico was really attached…

He shook his head, and clenched and unclenched his hands on his bedsheets. He took deep breaths, but they only made him dizzy. He willed his eyes to absorb the liquid he felt forming, and ended up just choking on his sobs.

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Outside, Will had paused just long enough to hear Nico start to snuffle. Surprised, he looked at the door, and wondered if he should go back inside.

What did that even mean? Will might be a healer, but he wasn’t psychic.
He sat down on the steps of Cabin 13 with a thunk. He’d stay until Nico stopped crying, then leave him alone, if that’s what the son of Hades really wanted.

“What are you doing?”

His head snapped up. Jason Grace was striding toward him. Will made killing motions with his hand across his throat and stood to meet him, a yard or so away where Nico wouldn’t hear them.

“I got rejected.” Will shrugged one shoulder. “It happens. I’m worried it’s going to ruin our friendship, of course.”

Jason frowned at him, then at the door. Suddenly he threw an arm around Will’s shoulders. “Come on, man. How does some archery sound?”

Will raised an eyebrow. “Great to me. You’re going to regret it, but I’m not arguing, o selfless one.”

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When Nico’s tears died down, a couple truths were beginning to rile up his stomach unpleasantly.

First of all – since when was he a coward?

Secondly – Will’s face. Oh gods, Will’s face.

The other guy had been actually hurt by Nico turning him away.

Thirdly – Nico had liked Will for weeks now. Was he really that self-destructing?

Nico was an idiot.

So what if it didn’t work out? So what if he got hurt? He was already hurting.

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“Didn’t know you like archery, Grace.”

Will’s shot went wide, soaring over the targets. Jason lowered his bow with a grin, turning to meet Nico as the latter stepped out of the shadows.

“How long have you been there?” Jason demanded.

“Long enough to know you suck,” Nico snorted.

Jason rubbed the back of his neck, looking from him over to Will, who was smiling a little brokenly.

“I know when I’m not wanted,” Jason teased. He clapped first Will on the back, then Nico. “I’ll catch the two of you later, ok?”

He sauntered off the practice field. Nico waited until he disappeared behind the buildings to turn back to Will.

Will placed his bow and quiver gently on the ground.

“So I’m pretty sure the whole camp thinks we’re dating after today,” Nico began.
“Yes. Probably,” Will said cautiously.

Nico drew in a breath. “Well, we wouldn’t want to give them the wrong impression.”

The smile lit up Will’s face.

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