

#### Chapters 1-5 (The Prayer- Underwater)

Chely Wright begins her memoir with memories from her childhood. She explicitly tells readers of her prayers and her negative thoughts surrounding how her sexuality impacts her family. Chely describes her siblings accidents, her father's accident, and her cousin passing from diabetes. Chely also describes her tormentors in elementary school for being different and for her socioeconomic status.

#### Chapters 6-10 (Let Me Sing For You- Opryland USA, 1989)

Chely describes her journey to the beginning of fame. She discloses that she started off in local nursing homes "singing for people in wheelchairs." Chely then elaborates on her many auditions she attended both in Kansas and Missouri. After growing a name for herself, Chely accepted a position at the age of 17 in Branson, Missouri at the Jubilee. Shortly following, Chely moved to Nashville where she worked at Opryland USA as a performer. Throughout the chapters, she always described her two relationships with males that she did not feel anything for. At the end of the Opryland USA chapter, Chely describes that rumors began to circulate about her sexuality after she began to spend time with a female that was known to be gay.

#### Chapters 11-15 (Brenda-A Dream Come True)

Within the next five chapters, Chely describes how her career and sexuality intertwined. First, Chely describes her romantic relationships with Brenda and Julia. Brenda was nineteen, one-year Chely's senior. They had a short relationship while Chely worked at Opryland. The relationship was unhealthy and Chely was thankful to get out of it. Afterwards, she decided to throw herself into music and landed a recording contract. During this time, she met and fell in love with Julia. After a few months, Julia decided to suppress her feelings and starting dating Philip, who she went on to marry. Chely described her heartbreak as unbearable. However, she

told readers that what got her through was her ability to tour and finishing her first album. Lastly, she was nominated for Top New Female Vocalist of 1995. She was extremely surprised when she won the nomination.

#### Chapters 16-20 (The Thin Line-“Single White Female”)

Chely began the chunk of chapters describing her childhood and its impact on her career. She recalls the first group of people she played to being veterans at the VA. She also remembers playing Taps at military funerals in the area, the last being her grandfather's. Additionally, Chely described her rekindled relationship with Julia, with Philip's permission. Shortly after cutting off communication with Julia, Chely began to spend a great deal of her time with Vince Gill. The two still continue their friendship today. She also expressed to readers her passion for play for troops overseas. This combined with her work ethic made her well-known in the country music industry as someone who worked hard and adored what they did.

#### Chapter 21-25 (Fame-All the Way to Memphis)

Chely starts off by saying that even though she is famous it was never the reason behind her becoming a musician. To her, fame meant that she was succeeding at what she loved to do. Additionally, Chely described her rise to the top of the music charts with her single “Single White Female.” She also elaborated on her yearning to emulate the women of country who came before her like Reba McEntire, Faith Hill, Dolly Parton, and Trisha Yearwood. Lastly, Chely explained her declining and official end of her relationship with Julia.

#### Chapters 26-30 (Bites and Stings-“Hard to Be a Husband, Hard to Be a Wife”)

Within these chapters, Chely describes her growing fame in country music. Additionally, she explains that Julia divorced Philip leading her to move in with Chely. While they moved in together, their relationship deteriorated quickly as Julia was not interested. Additionally, Chely

details her growing romantic relationship with Brad Paisley. She also explains the pressure for her to keep their relationship secret and eventually how it ended.

#### Chapters 31-35 (Casualties-From Sea to Shining Sea)

Chely disclosed her time in couples therapy with Julia in order to make things work after she broke up with Brad Paisley. Additionally, she describes her family trip to Disney world after contributing music to *The Little Mermaid II*. She expressed how much fun she had with her whole family but at the same time missed being with Julia. Lastly, she described her experiences playing for troops overseas after 9/11.

#### Chapters 36-40 (Back to the Desert-Don't Ask Don't Tell)

Throughout these chapters, Chely explains her various experiences with the troops. First, she describes her privilege to be on an HR military flight. After coming home from that tour, Chely had called her sister and explained that she needed to drive to Tennessee immediately. Her sister got in her car and did so. At that time, Chely came out to her sister but asked her to still keep it between them. Additionally, Chely described her experience of singing at the Vice President's residence. Lastly, she elaborated on her personal beliefs on the military and their "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy.

#### Chapters 41-45 (Hannity and Wright-My Dad)

Chely disclosed to readers that over the next few years of her life she struggled with her identity. Specifically, she was asked to participate on a Fox radio talk show after putting out her single "Bumper of My S.U.V.". When confronted about her political beliefs on the show, she disclosed that she was upset with the injustices of LGBT+ couples not being able to adopt children. Additionally, many musicians on Music Row were asking her questions about her rumored sexuality. Since this made her nervous, her relationship with Julia once again became

strained. They decided to break up and move into their own respective houses. In doing so, Chely met and began dating Kristin. However, Kristin's ex-boyfriend began to blackmail and out Kristin and Chely. This in turn, led to Chely coming out to her father when she went to his hometown to play a show. Her father was nothing but supportive and loving towards her.

#### Chapters 46-50 (The Boy Scouts of America-One of My Angels)

Chely starts the chunk of chapters describing her private performance for The Boy Scouts of America. Right before this performance, Chely was informed by one of their personnel that it was important for them to be conservative and do the right thing by not letting women and gays into their organization. With that, Chely became agitated and donated her profited money from the show to a local LGBT+ agency specializing in outreach in their community. Additionally, Chely describes her parents ruthlessness when it came to Jeny's weight as a child. She continued by saying that she continuously prayed for peace after breaking up with Kristin. When that peace was granted for a brief moment, she thanked G-d by cycling thirteen miles in the snow in only pajama pants, a jacket, and tennis shoes. She disclosed that she still continues to cycle today. Chely also describes past relationships that have wronged her and made a major impact on her in her life. Lastly, she described the beginning of her relationship with Rodney Crowell who helped her produce her next album in late 2006, early 2007.

#### Chapters 51-55 (A Million to One-Where Do I Fit In?)

Throughout these chapters, Chely talks a lot about coming out, belonging, finding her place, and feeling at home in her identity. Specifically, Chely realizes that she may want one million fans and supporters but in reality she really only needs one. Additionally, she discusses her experience in coming out to her brother. After taking time to digest it, Master Sergeant Wright of the Marine Corps, told Chely that he loved and supported her for all of who she is.

Lastly, Chely struggled with how she fit into pride celebrations. She concluded that maybe once she came out to the world, she would be more at home and at peace.

#### Chapters 56-59 (Hate Crimes Are Going Down? -State of the Union)

Chely discloses that she believes bullying that causes an individual to die by suicide is also considered a hate crime. She argues that even though the tormentor is not the one “pulling the trigger” they are still making the life of the individual miserable enough to make them want to take their own lives. Additionally, Chely describes her move to New York City and the adjustment of her life and culture. She also explains that as she begins to come out she does not know yet how comfortable she is being at a lesbian bar because she is afraid to get recognized. Finally, Chely acknowledges that coming out and speaking her truth is scary. However, she is ready for the uncertainty as to whether her fans will still support her or not. Chely Wright is a pioneer for LGBTQ+ singer/songwriters in country music and the women of country music.