

7 Her Getaway

"Slight triggers. Talks of abuse and toxic behaviors"

3 ½ years later....

Bailey POV

Denied? How the hell can the restraining order be denied? Levi tried to kidnap my child after breaking into my home while I was at my night job but they denied my restraining order against him.

I look at the reason listed on the bottom of the form, but it just doesn't make sense. This isn't some domestic dispute. This is about the safety of my son. Levi wants nothing to do with Taegan. All he wants is some kind of leverage over me.

After nding out I was pregnant, I hoped and prayed the baby was Axel's, but the timing just didn't line up. I was 12-13 weeks along. It was weird because, even with that timing, the baby still didn't add up to being Levi's since that was during one of our off periods, but it sure as hell couldn't have been from my one-night stand because that was only 6 weeks prior. Taegan couldn't have been anyone else's but Levi's.

He ended up being born prematurely. Really, really prematurely. I was technically only 28 weeks pregnant when I had my son, and wasn't expecting to go into labor so soon. My appointments showed that he was developing abnormally fast, but my appointment at 23 weeks still showed I had plenty of time. The doctor just thought he was going to be a large baby.

When he was born, he didn't even look like a premiè. He looked like a full-term baby and was perfectly healthy. The doctors at the hospital said my public health clinic doctor probably just got the timing wrong, blaming my doctor and not the strange timing of it all. I had my periods up till 8 weeks before I found out I was pregnant. The whole pregnancy just didn't add up.

Levi supported me throughout my whole pregnancy and even through my rst year as a mom. I had almost forgotten about what an asshole he was. He was very caring and attentive, and I started to be completely reliant on him. He wasn't particularly close to Taegan, which I thought was just because of Taegan being little and so breakable when he was rst born. Some guys just aren't comfortable with babies. The more Taegan grew, the more noticeable it was that there was no real connection between him and Levi. They didn't even look related.

Taegan had super fair blonde hair, and crystal blue eyes. Levi has greenish hazel eyes and dark brown hair. I have dark brown hair, too, and dark brown eyes. I thought that Taegan's hair would get darker as he aged, along with his eyes, but they stayed light blonde, turning golden in the sun, and his eyes stayed crystal clear blue. There was some of me in his appearance with his smile and the shape of his nose, but nothing of Levi.

He looks like Axel. I know it's not possible because of the timing, but as he grew, he reminded me more and more of the man that stole my heart that one fateful night all those years ago. Even his scent reminded me of Axel's. I used to just sniff him like a freak for hours while he slept, being comforted by my own baby's smell.

I noticed the older Taegan got, the more resentful Levi became of him. He would scoff at me when I was affectionate with my own son, and he even started to accuse me of cheating on him with someone else to make Taegan.

I don't know if that night with Axel really counts as cheating, but one night in particular, when I had a rough day at work and had just gotten back to the apartment we shared with Taegan after picking him up from my grandmothers, I snapped when he started to accuse me of cheating and saying Taegan wasn't his.

I told him Taegan was someone else's, just as a backhanded comment.

It's not possible, but I was even starting to think Taegan wasn't his.

That was the rst time that Levi hit me.

He slapped me in the face, then screamed at me for being a worthless w***e. That was the night I left him for good.

My grandmother told me to call the police that night and le charges, but his father has pull in the police force and local government, so I was too scared. If I had called the police then, maybe this restraining order wouldn't have been denied now.

Last night, Levi tried to force his way past my grandmother to take Taegan from where he was sleeping in his room. The commotion woke him, and he called the police from the house phone in my grandmother's room while grandma was trying to prevent Levi from coming into the house all the way from the mudroom.

The police came, and I came home early from work right after they got there. They wouldn't even arrest him, saying it was a domestic dispute. Because Taegan was his son, they claimed he had a right to be there, even going as far as saying it was my fault for not letting my son's father keep him while I was out, insinuating I was out partying instead of working at the convenience store.

The woman ocer was downright hostile towards me, saying I should feel lucky that Taegan's father still wanted to be a part of his life. She said if I'm going to pawn my child off on my family so I can go out. I should at least let his father have rst rights. She doesn't know what he's really like, though. No one does.

I was told by the less judgemental male ocer to go to the station and le charges and requested a restraining order if I felt it was necessary, since they really couldn't do anything without him physically harming one of us, and since he technically didn't break into the house. Grandma had let him through the front door into the mudroom to tell him that I was out working, and that's when Levi told her he was there for Taegan and tried getting past the second set of doors to the rest of the house.

I was astounded by the police and what they told me. That's complete bullshit if you ask me. He clearly was physically trying to force his way in, manhandling my grandmother in the process, but they did not see it that way. He may have rights to see Taegan, but he doesn't ever try to take him like that. He uses his visitation as an excuse to be around me, trying to pressure me into going back to him.

He scares me, and I don't know how much more of this we can take. It's not just me anymore. The bastard tried to take my son.

I did exactly as I was told to do at the police station, then went to the public court with a friend of my grandmother's, a retired lawyer, and led a petition for sole custody of my son with them on the grounds that Levi was not his father. I know there isn't any possibility that he's Axel's, since the timing just doesn't work, but I'm hoping and praying by some miracle that he is. I'd be ne with the 1 in a zillionth chance of getting pregnant by a public toilet seat or immaculate conception before wishing for Levi to really be my son's father.

As I'm reading the denial notice for the fth time, my phone starts ringing. I look at the ID, and it's the devil himself. I'm sure Mr. Lahey, my grandmother's lawyer friend, has had the court papers served to him by now. I considered rejecting his call, but he would just keep calling. Or worse, have his dad call me. I don't want to deal with that domineering asshole even more than I want to deal with his son.

"What?" I answered in a harsh voice.

"What the actual f**k is this, Bailey?" he sneers at me through the phone line. "You're ling for sole custody? What the hell kind of reason is genetic testing and paternal hearing? Are you f*****g serious?"

"That's what it says, Levi. It also says not to contact me or Taegan until the day of the court proceedings."

Are you serious right now, Bailey? You can't do this to me. You and I both know I'm the only person who could be his father. Who the f**k else could it be? Is this because of last night? Bailey, I just missed having you both with me. I miss our family, baby. Don't get back at me with some sick joke like this."

I sighed loudly, "It's not a sick joke. I'm done playing this game with you and you don't ever listen when I tell you to leave us alone. I had s*x with someone else while we were apart once, and Taegan looks just like that guy. I'm hoping and praying that he is Taegan's dad so I can nally be done with you."

The phone goes silent for several long seconds. I can hear Levi's ragged breathing like he is trying to control his anger, but nothing else. No other noise was coming from the background, making his breathing through the silence eerie.

"You're lying."

I huffed out a laugh, "I'm not. It was a one-night stand, but that's all it takes."

The ragged breathing and his silence returned, making me nervous. I expected him to yell and scream at me. I didn't expect this eerie and haunting calm.

"You better f*****g hope I'm his father, Bailey, because if it turns out I'm not, I'll kill him and make you watch before killing you."

After that chilling threat, he just hangs up, leaving me gaping in the kitchen, a cold sweat breaking out on the back of my neck. I get the feeling he isn't blung. He might just be crazy enough to do it.

I thought if he saw the court documents claiming he wasn't Taegan's dad, that might be enough to get him to leave me alone. I didn't think he would threaten to kill us over it.

I'm standing in the middle of the kitchen in a daze for I don't even know how long before grandma and Taegan get home, nding me standing there.

"Mama!" Taegan squeals, running towards me and barreling into my legs, making me stagger as I regained my composure. "Mama, mama, Grandma Lucy got me ice cream after the park! I swung-ed so so high, and she yelled to stop, but then I jumped and she wouldn't let me swung again. So I found this big, big stick and-" Taegan continues to ramble on about his day out with grandma, and I try to nod along and listen, but I'm still in shock by Levi's threat.

"Is everything okay, Bailey dear? Did the court not accept the paperwork?" Grandma came up and rubbed my shoulder. I try to offer her a reassuring smile, but she knows me too well. She just looks at me with more concern.

"They accepted it and he was served. He just didn't take it well."

Her wise eyes go weary, "How so?"

I look down at my son who is now just staring up at me, adoration and curiosity on his adorable little face. He's so beautiful. I can't believe I put my beautiful child in this type of situation. I feel like we are damned no matter what happens at this point.

"Hey Tay, can you do me a favor and get me the water bottle I left in my room? I'm feeling a bit thirsty."

He scrunches up his little nose, like he's debating if he really wants to go get it or not, but after about 3 seconds, he runs back to my room to get it for me, skipping the whole way.

"Levi said if the test came back and he wasn't his, he would kill us both," I quickly told my grandmother while my son was not within listening distance.

Grandma gasped, bringing both of her hands to her mouth. "No! Bailey, that's not some idle threat. Not with him."

I looked at her grimly, "I know."

"Do you really think he's not Taegan's father?"

Taegan comes running back into the living room, completely forgetting to bring me the water as he gets distracted by his toy dinosaur he left on the couch. His bright blue eyes send a pang through my heart as a memory of Axel's intense stare comes forth. He has the same beautiful eyes as him. So much about Taegan reminds me of the man who is practically a stranger to me. I don't know if it's just wishful thinking, since there is really no possibility, but I have this gut feeling that he is not Levi's at all. That leaves no one else but Axel.

"I told you about the man I met 3 and a half years ago after leaving Levi on vacation. Taegan looks just like him. I know it sounds weird, but even his smell reminds me of him. I don't know, Grandma, but either way, I'm scared for my son."

Grandma rubs my shoulder sympathetically once again, then wraps her arms around me. "I have some money saved. It's not much, but it's enough to support you and Taegan for a few weeks. I think you both need to go, Bailey. Take him and leave town, keep him safe, at least until the paternity tests come back. Maybe try to nd a job in a new town. I'll work on selling this house and I'll join you when I can."

"Grandma," I turned to look at her in disbelief. "I'm not leaving you." What if Levi tries to mess with her while me and Taegan are away to get to us?

"No, you're not. You are keeping your baby safe, just like I'm trying to do," she pats my cheek lovingly. "You need to put him rst, and you know things are just going to get worse here if you stay. When is the court date?"

I bite my lip, trying to keep my tears at bay, "6 weeks," I squeak out.

"That's not long at all," she smiles at me sadly. "I will be ne. I have friends to help when I need it, and you will just be a phone call away."

My tears break free. I can no longer hold them back. I love this woman so much. She has always been my rock, and thinking about leaving her is painful, but she's right. I need to keep Taegan safe.

"You'll join us when you can?" I asked her.

She smiles so warmly, with so much adoration and a few of her own tears spill over, "No one can stop me. Now go pack your stuff. You will have to make a stealthy get away early in the morning. You know that crazy man will be watching the house tonight."

She's right. He will be waiting to ambush me as I leave for my second job. As I think about where to go, only one place comes to mind. A secret hotel not listed on any travel site, hidden away in plane view. I feel a pull in that direction, and know that's where I can hide my son away and keep him safe. I just hope by going back to that small town, I'm not risking my heart all over again.