

Keily Book 2: Dating My Enemy |

Snowball Fight Surrender

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Someone screamed. Or no, multiple kids screamed.

James released my pants. Now I was thankful that they hadn't been torn off in the heat of the moment.

But before we could fully catch our breath, the excited shouts of children grew louder.

James and I crawled out of our snowy hideaway, greeted by the enthusiastic cheers of a group of kids who had gathered nearby. Their faces lit up with excitement as they admired our handiwork.

"Did you build that?" one of the kids asked.

"We sure did," James replied.

"Catch!" Another child said.

He threw a snowball at James. James instinctively reached out and caught the snowball hurtling toward him with lightning-fast reflexes. But instead of launching it back with full force, the snowball crumbled in his hand, the icy powder scattering into the air like delicate confetti.

A mischievous grin spread across the child's face as he declared, "Snowball fight! The igloo is base! No one is allowed to touch you when you are hiding inside."

With a chorus of excited cheers, the snowball fight began. James and I joined in, our movements gentle and playful as we engaged in the spirited battle with the children. We ducked behind the walls of the igloo, using it as our fortress against the flurry of snowballs flying through the air.

But despite the competitive atmosphere, James and I made sure to play with restraint, mindful of the young age and delicate nature of our opponents. We dodged and weaved, laughing as the children's gleeful shouts filled the crisp winter air.

James was good with kids. He couldn't be more perfect, could he?

As the snowball fight reached its peak, it became clear that the odds were stacked against us. With the children's enthusiasm growing by the minute, James and I exchanged a knowing glance before raising our hands in mock surrender.

"We surrender!" James declared, his voice filled with playful defeat as we threw ourselves onto the snow-covered ground, surrounded by the triumphant cheers of our victorious opponents. In that moment, as we lay there laughing and breathless, I felt a sense of pure joy wash over me.

We said goodbye to the kids before making our way back to James's car and heading home. As James pulled up in front of my house, I couldn't help but feel a pang of sadness knowing our evening together was coming to an end. But before I could muster the courage to say goodbye, James turned to me. His eyes filled with a mixture of nervousness and determination.

But, James was always so confident...

"Keily, there's something I wanted to ask you," he said.

I felt my heart skip a beat. My curiosity piqued as I turned to face him, waiting with bated breath for what he had to say.

"Will you... come have dinner with my parents after the Valentine's dance?" he asked.

I blinked in surprise, caught off guard by his unexpected question. Dinner with his parents? It wasn't something I had anticipated, and yet the thought of meeting his family filled me with a mixture of excitement and nervousness.

"Really?" I replied, unable to hide the surprise in my voice.

"Yeah, my dad will be back from his business trip by then, and I thought it would be nice for you to meet him."

I couldn't help but feel touched by his invitation, by the fact that he wanted to introduce me to his parents. I had already met James's mom at the hospital, but this felt different, more official somehow. It was the quintessential "meet the parents" dinner, a milestone in any relationship that felt both thrilling and terrifying all at once.

"I'd love to," I replied, a hint of nervousness creeping into my voice despite my best efforts to sound confident.

James's smile widened, his eyes shining with genuine happiness. "Great! I'll pick you up after the dance then," he said.

I couldn't help but feel a surge of excitement for the opportunity to get to know James's parents. Meeting the people who had shaped him into the person he was today was a big deal. But alongside that gratitude was a nagging sense of apprehension, a fear of not measuring up to the expectations of his family.

I gave James a kiss before I stepped out of the car. "I'll see you soon," I said.

"See you soon," he smiled back.

I watched him drive off. He took the piece of my heart that he owned with him.

As I stepped into the warmth of my house, I tried to shake off the lingering nerves that still clung to me. I took off my jacket and shoes and immediately began fidgeting with my shirt.

"Hi, mom and dad," I said.

They were sitting on the couch, watching me. Clearly they'd been watching a movie until now. Before I could even make it to the stairs, my parents were already eyeing me with curious expressions.

"Hey there, Keily. What's got you looking so fidgety?" my dad asked.

I tried to brush off his question with a casual shrug, but my mom wasn't about to let me off the hook so easily.

"Come on, Keily. Tell us," she pressed.

I sighed, knowing there was no use trying to hide it. They'd find out anyway at some point. It might as well be now.

"Okay, fine. I'm going to have dinner with James's family after the Valentine's dance," I admitted, feeling a blush creeping up my cheeks.

My parents exchanged amused glances before breaking into knowing smiles.

“Well, well, well. Look who’s moving up in the world,” my dad teased, his tone laced with playful sarcasm.

I rolled my eyes, feeling my cheeks flush with embarrassment.

“It’s not a big deal,” I said, although we all knew that it was.

“Of course it is. They might be the grandparents for your future kid,” Mom said.

“Mom!” I screamed. “I’m not having kids.”

“Not yet,” Dad said. “You’re still a kid yourself!”

“I’m not!” I quickly objected.

“But when you do decide to have little ones one day, I really hope they have your cute, round cheeks,” Mom said.

Feeling increasingly flustered by their teasing, I huffed off to my room, determined to escape their relentless interrogation. But as I closed the door behind me, I couldn’t help but feel a surge of anxiety creeping back in.

Leave it to my parents to make me even more nervous about meeting James’s family. But despite their teasing, I knew deep down that they were just curious about my life.

I was so much happier since we moved here.

I got ready for bed— took a warm shower, brushed my teeth, and slipped into my favorite pajamas. Then I settled onto my bed with my phone in hand. I missed James. I know that’s ridiculous because we’d spent so much time together already. But I couldn’t help how I felt. I wanted to talk to him.

Keily
Can I call you?

He didn’t text back. Instead, my phone rang. I answered with a smile.

“Hey, James.”

“Hey, Keily,” he replied. “Are you missing me already?”

"No," I said, although he'd be able to tell from my tone of voice that I was lying. "I was just thinking about dinner with your family."

"Yeah, me too. I wanted to give you some more details about what to expect."

I leaned back against my pillows, feeling a sense of comfort wash over me as James began to share more about his family.

"So, as you know, my mom is a neurologist, and my dad sells machine parts, like for ventilators and such," he explained. "They really do work all the time."

"That's impressive," I replied.

"Yeah, they're pretty amazing," James agreed.

They were amazing at their careers. But were they also good parents? How much time did they spend with James? Judging from Christmas, I didn't think it was all that much.

"And as for dinner, my parents don't really do casual, so you might want to wear something nice. And the food will be fancy too, so be prepared for that."

I nodded, making a mental note to choose my outfit carefully for the occasion.

"Got it. Thanks for the heads up," I said.

"Of course, anything for you," James replied. "I'm really looking forward to introducing you to them, Keily. I know they're going to love you just as much as I do."

A rush of warmth flooded my chest at his words, a sense of happiness blooming within me at the thought of being accepted into James's family.

"I can't wait," I said.

As the night stretched on, James and I found ourselves engrossed in conversation. The hours slipped away unnoticed as we talked about everything and nothing at all. With each word exchanged, the distance between us seemed to shrink.

I felt so close to him.

We shared hopes and dreams. We talked about our future together. And we yawned.

The conversation waned and fatigue began to set in. But neither of us said goodbye. I lay down with the phone pressed between the pillow and my ear, still listening.

I only closed my eyes for a brief moment.

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