

## Chapter 167: Right, little dude?

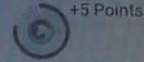
Ethan's POV:

I couldn't decide whether my life was terrible or getting better right now. There were moments when it seemed like Hannah and I could work things out, especially after I found her on the shores. But everything unraveled a few weeks later when I kept making mistakes, repeatedly slipping up. The final straw was when Tess found Hannah in the cafe, and I wasn't there to help her. And despite my belief that we could fix things, Hannah wasn't so sure. She chose to move on, and I was left devastated, shocked, and utterly lost.

I turned to the only friend I had in the Shores: Hannah's mom, Georgie. She tried not to take sides, but it was clear she supported her daughter unconditionally. I couldn't blame her; any parent would stand by their child and I would do the same if it was Michael in my shoes. Anyway, Georgie offered her advice, suggesting I give Hannah some space to think things through. So, I did as Hannah asked, and as her mom told me.

Giving Hannah some space was even more challenging when I knew exactly where she was but couldn't see her because she didn't want to. I thought that I would see her whenever I picked Michael at her place, but she was living with

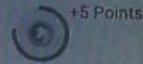
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Patricia so she sent her to hand Michael over to me. It was a complicated situation. Patricia loved Hannah as if she were her own, and she loved me too, which put her in a difficult spot. Despite her feelings, Patricia never interfered or voiced her opinion, which was a relief because I didn't need more people telling me I'd screwed up.

The advice I got from everyone was to be patient, and it eventually paid off. One day, Hannah called, sounding upset. She said that Patricia and her mom were out of town and asked me to take care of Michael. It was clear that she didn't want to ask me, but I decided not to take it personally. Arguing with her would only push her further away. I took care of Michael that day and, by the end, things didn't work out the way I wanted because we ended up arguing anyway because I told her she didn't need to do everything herself. I foolishly mentioned that she had the resources to never work another day in her life if she chose, given her family's wealth and my own. It hurt her pride, and we both stood our ground, stubborn heads that we were.

The following day, I picked Michael up again, as I had promised her, knowing she was still angry with me. We didn't talk a lot that day, but a few days later on the next chance that we had, we talked and managed to have a real conversation. I listened to her, gave her my point of view in a hard situation that she was in, and apologized to her.



+5 Points

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After that, our relationship started to mend.

Recently, we were in a better place, in one of the best phases of our recent past. I was cautious not to ruin it and hoped to leave behind the turbulence of our past. For the first time in a while, I felt like we were moving forward.

After that, enjoying the good moment that we were having, I decided to give Hannah my apartment keys so she could pick up Michael more easily. She hesitated at first, but eventually, she accepted them, which felt like a win. I was beginning to rebuild her trust in me. I took care of Michael not just because he was my son, but also for Hannah's sake. It was good to have her back in my life, even though I knew she wouldn't give me the opening I wanted. But it was a start, my chance to prove myself and not mess it up.

However, there was something I had been deliberately ignoring for a while – my job. My secretary had called multiple times, asking if I would return to the city and when that might happen. I had several clients needing my attention, and as the boss, I couldn't delegate everything. But I didn't have the heart to leave them, not for business. I was enjoying being a full-time father and didn't want to sacrifice that time. Hannah had started to see me as a stable and capable parent, and I didn't want to lose that progress by going back to the city. So, once again, I ignored the demand of my obligations as a CEO

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+5 Points

over my son and his mom, who I was trying to gain back.

Michael and I were having a great time together. At the beginning, without Patricia, it was tough and messy. Michael cried nonstop on the first day, which alarmed me, and I took him to the hospital. It led to a fight between Hannah and me because she was prioritizing her work over Michael's needs. But we eventually made up, and our relationship improved. I decided to learn more about parenting through books and YouTube videos, and things got easier after that too.

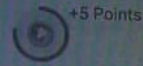
Once Hannah accepted my apartment keys, things improved from my perspective. She had the freedom to come and go as she pleased. One day, she found Michael and me sleeping on the couch after watching baby videos online. "What are you doing?" She shook my shoulder gently and asked me.

"Well, I guess we fell asleep watching videos about how to do good parenting," I told her with a lazy smile on my lips. In fact, there was a tutorial on TV that was teaching a parent about tummy time and educational fun for babies.

She smiled back at me and asked: "And did you two have a good time together?"

"Yeah, I think so, right, little dude?" I told her and looked at a sleepy Michael who was waking up in

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my arms. "I'm sorry, I guess that now his nap time is messed up," I told her apologetically.

She took him from me, and I said: "Lucky me that tomorrow is Saturday, right?" Besides, you dealt with him the whole day, so it's my time, right?"

"Well, good luck then," I told her. And then, she

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hugged me. "Is everything okay, Hannah?" I asked her worriedly.

She smiled at me and said: "Honestly, it's more than okay. It was the first day that I had something to celebrate at work!" she exclaimed.

"Well, congratulations, then!" I told her.

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"I wish I could tell you more, but I need to put Michael to bed first," she said.

"Okay, see you around, and I will want to know what is happening, okay?" I told her.

"Sure. Will tell you the story next time, OK?" She asked.

"It's a date," I told her. I could see a c\*\*\*k in her smile, so I knew that I had exaggerated. "I mean, it's a cup of tea again and a conversation just like last time," I tried to mend things. I knew that sounded ridiculous, but it was the best that I have mustered right now.

She nodded at me a little embarrassed and left, but I could see in her eyes that she was trying to grasp what was happening and if I had really changed. After the conversation when we mended things, I felt that she was willing to trust in me again. It was good to have her in my life even though it wasn't the way that I really wanted that to happen. But if she was willing to give me at least a little space in her life, I would accept it.

All I wanted her to see was that I was trying my best for our baby and for her. Maybe she would give me some space in her life again, and this time, I promised not to screw it up.

