

## Chapter 46 A Second Test

The sound of Alaric wakes me. I see him sitting on the bottom of the bed when I open my eyes. "Good morning, baby girl," he says, holding out a cup. I sit up and take the coffee from him.

"What is the plan now, Sir?" We need to find out who it was, although something tells me it was Max or Beatrix.

"The plan is, you drink that and pee on this." He places down a test, and my eyes roll. "Don't, baby girl; you say it's stress, fine, but let's be sure."

"I can't see this one saying pregnant when the last said I wasn't." It's a waste of money.

"Just take it for me, please, baby girl." He asks, and I nod.

"Fine, but I meant with the fire and everything." That is what I wanted to know the plan for.

"It was my fault. I hadn't put the alarm on; when I came home, I left the garage door unlocked, which is how whoever it was got in so easily." He shrugs slightly like it's nothing.

I moved onto his lap. "So what is happening, Sir?" He still hadn't told me.

"All the cars were moved out this morning. The two burnt ones were taken as part of the investigation. Beatrix will be questioned to determine whether she was involved. Then I hope that the insurance pays out."

I stare at him, confused by his words. "Why wouldn't they?"

"Because I didn't have the alarm on, the door wasn't locked, and it wasn't an accident." He explains, and I nod.

"You have cameras, Alaric," I explain. He nods, but his expression says they weren't much help.

"Two of which were covered to stop them from being seen. There's nothing to show what happened in that place, to confirm this wasn't an insurance scam," he explains, and I stare shocked.

"You have money. Why would you set alight your own cars for more?" I ask, as nothing makes sense.

"People do, baby girl. That is enough questions. Take the test." He insists, and I follow his order. After picking up the test, I go to the bathroom. I'm not sure why he wants me to do the test.

I've done one; it was said I was not pregnant. Two minutes later, I returned to the bedroom and sat on the bed. I placed down the test and grabbed the cup.

Alaric stares at it. "You've been ill, and I want to be sure. If you're not pregnant, you need a break from the stress, baby girl," he explains. He says it like he can just turn around to people and say, 'Hey, come back next week. I need a break.'

Maybe a few days away will help? No stress, no noise and no people? Then again, Alaric can't just leave, not after someone set fire to his car. There is too much going on for me to simply have a break.

"Baby girl." Alaric's words are quiet, and I consider how I can take a break from the stress and drama. There isn't one. "Baby girl, you're pregnant." Alaric shouts and my head raises.

"What?" I glance down at the test in his hand. "No, I'm not." That's not possible. I take the test and look. It says pregnant. "This isn't possible." It's just not. At all.

I was so bothered by the stress and drama that I didn't consider whether I was. Now what? I feel like running and running as far as I can go to avoid Alaric and him trying to pay for me.

"You can't run, baby girl." His words are quiet, and my eyes roll. "Don't roll roll your eyes." His words are an order, and I fight the urge to roll them again to see what he will do next.

Right now, me acting like a brat won't help. Sighing, I raise my head and look at him. His face is flat. No emotion, total fucking poker face. Right now, Alaric, really? I want to know his reaction and how he feels about this news.

Apparently, he won't let me react based on his reaction. My eyes glare towards him, and he chuckles.

"I know what you're doing, baby girl. How I feel means nothing; ultimately, it's your choice." His statement has my head shaking in denial.

"It should be our choice, Sir." I point out, considering we're in this together.

"I will support you regardless of your choice. I do not want you to choose based on me. If I say I am happy and want the baby, but you don't, I don't want you changing your mind for me." He speaks, and I nod. Was that him saying he's happy and wants the baby?

"I can't decide without knowing how you feel." It's a fact; every part of me is screaming to keep the baby and be happy. I will, but I need to know his thoughts. "Sir."

He sighs, hearing my words.

"Look, I know how I feel. I know what I want to do and what I have decided, but I don't want to say it before I know your true feelings." My words are desperate. I don't want him to say he is happy and agrees, but deep down, he is not.

He cups my cheeks and looks at me. "You're scared. I can see, baby girl. You're scared you will say your choice, and I go ahead acting like I agree and dismissing my own feelings. Or maybe you're scared what you say will make me run. It won't, so tell me." His speech has me staring at him.

I don't think I can just say. "Can you just tell me how you feel?" I ask, waiting. Something tells me he will go along with what I choose, and I don't want that.

"Baby girl, that day you disappeared, I felt like I had lost part of myself. Fear that I wouldn't get you back had crippled me. Then, I heard her words, and I was speechless. I stared at you, and at first, I thought it was the worst news ever, purely because I was waiting for you to look at me and realise that I'm not enough." He admits.

So he doesn't want a baby? "Alaric-" My words are stopped by his hand covering my mouth.

"Don't speak, just listen. That was maybe for a split second. I saw myself as I was twenty years ago, with a baby and alone because I wouldn't be enough. Then I remembered you're nothing like her, and I actually hoped that what Beatrix had said was true and that you were pregnant." He explained his feelings to me.

So, he does want the baby? I stare at him. I was so sure he wouldn't. Jake is twenty-one. Why would he want another baby now?

"So, to answer your question, yes, I'm happy about this, yes, I want the baby. But." His words become serious, and he looks at me. "I ultimately want you, and I'm willing to do what you pick going forward." He cups my cheeks and looks at me. "So you decide."

I nod and go to speak, his head shaking.

"Don't do that. By decide, I mean take time to really consider it. You just found out, so take a few days to really consider this baby girl. There are some things you will hate if you decide to have this baby," he suggests, and I stare at him.

"What would I hate?" I don't understand.

"The fact that you can't avoid my money," he says quickly, and I know he's right. "The fact that you will either be in your own place alone with the baby and me a visitor or living here full time, depending on your choice." he explains it, and I know he's right.

It feels too soon to move in, and I would hate to rush, but I would also hate to live somewhere else with his baby.

"Then there's the fact that you're tied to me for life." his words shocked me.

"One, I want to be. I don't want reasons not to be tied to you for life. Two, Beatrix has proved that is bullshit. Even a woman can walk away from her child and free herself of the child and father." That last one is pointless. I wouldn't do that.

"And what if I really did already know how I felt and what I wanted, Sir?" I wasn't lying when I said that.

"Don't tell me, consider it. Consider everything, let yourself get used to the idea and consider all the outcomes before you fully decide," he explains, and I nod.

Most wouldn't do that. Most would either want the woman to know instantly. So, maybe he is right? He's looked out for me and cared for me. Why would this be any different? Surely I am happy and want to say I will keep the baby, but I haven't processed it, or considered it. So I will give it at least a day.

"Right, breakfast. Let's see if you can at least eat something small." He stands and waits as I get ready. Walking down, I sit and consider this. I know keeping the baby means putting away my issues about his money.

As much as I want to say I don't want or need anything from him, even on the lowest wage, I wouldn't be able to give our baby things he needs and wants, which are seen as luxuries. So I would have to accept his help.

He puts the plate with toast on it in front of me, and I stare at it, considering things. Having the baby means delaying my plans to build a business. I take a bite of the toast.

Unless I focus on it now, I have like eight months, right? So could I get it sorted before the baby comes? I drop the toast and run to the downstairs toilet and throw up.

I hear Alaric walking towards me. "Don't come near me while I'm being sick," I groan, and he chuckles. "It's disgusting." I don't want him to see this.

"Baby girl, it's nothing. You need to get something for it, though, as you've barely eaten all week and can no longer blame the stress." He's right, so I nod and hear him leave.

Sorting myself out, I walk back through, and the toast is gone, as is the smell, which is good. I sit, and a glass is placed in front of me. My eyes look from it to Alaric. "You really think I can drink that?" He is in denial.

"Just try. It's a smoothie, so it has a lot of nutrients you're losing, and it has ginger, which should help with the sickness. I'm not saying it will help you be able to eat, but try drink it then we can sort out some antisickness medication, otherwise tonight needs changing." His words cause me to look at him in confusion.

Wait, the double date. "We're not cancelling." One, Bex should get this date, and two, I get to question the guy and decide for myself whether I trust him or not.

"I'm not saying we cancel, but if we can't arrange for you to sit and eat food, we can't go for the meal. Unless you are happy to spend time with your head in the toilet?" He looked at me, amused.

He's right. "Fine." I relent, lift the glass, and take a sip. I watch as he sits with his laptop, and slowly, I manage to drink it all. It won't help, though, not if I can't eat food.