

Accidentally Pregnant By My Alpha Best friends

We Listened to the Darkness by Sorin Pax 241

241-He Is A Man Of The House For A Reason

Madeline:

“So, are you getting kicked out? Did you do something?” I asked, partly out of curiosity. They had a lot of luggage, two children, another man with them, and she was pregnant. I did not understand the situation.

“Oh, my husband had a fight with the alpha of his pack. He was a warrior. When my husband refused to bow to his orders, he kicked us out,” she explained.

I felt terrible for her. It was the same everywhere. The alphas and royals always got their way.

“But you got the alpha who stood with you. I know what happened was really saddening, but in the end, you found the right man,” she said to me. 1

Everything that happened that day had been broadcast live, so everyone had seen the drama.

“Yeah, I feel really lucky to have him,” I replied awkwardly, not knowing how else to respond.

“Anyway, I guess we’re going to be neighbors for now,” she said, smiling widely.

“Yeah, before we get kicked out of the motel too,” I replied, “but it’s okay. We’ll all be fine.”

“Are you guys going to stay in the woods?” she asked.

I nodded slightly. I did not want to tell her about the cabin yet.

Part of it was because I did not want them to feel upset about not being near us in the woods, and I did not want them to panic.

I decided to keep it to myself for now.

“Oh, our kids can play together for now,” she said, pointing at Bodhi, Elara, and Gina.

“You know them, I’m pretty sure,” I said, gesturing toward my children and she nodded.

“But here, let me introduce you. This is Little Ronnie and Riley.”

Her two children stepped forward. They were around the same age as mine and blended in easily.

They were welcoming and immediately wrapped their arms around my kids.

“So you’re here with your husband and his brother?” I asked and once again, she nodded.

“Yeah. His wife is also coming over. They kicked all of us out,” she responded in her gentle tone.

I felt worried for her. It was a big family, and I did not know how they were going to manage.

“Anyway, I’ll go rest. I’m really tired. Can you send my kids back once yours are settled in the room?” she asked, and I bobbed my head in response to her.

At the same time, Baxter stepped out after helping the men with their luggage.

After my kids played for a few minutes with Ronnie and Riley, we sent them to their rooms.

Baxter and I had been standing with the vending machine, watching the kids from afar.

Throughout the whole time, Baxter did not say anything.

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+25 Bonus

We went back into the room, and he got us warm water and prepared the noodles for all of us before handing us

our cups.¹

We sat on the couch while the kids stayed on the bed, sharing stories with each other.

“I’m sorry,” I uttered, slurping the noodles to make it seem like it was just a casual conversation. 1

“You don’t need to apologize for the littlest things. You had every right to be upset,” he replied casually, eating the noodles, which were basically gone in one bite.

I felt bad for him. He was leaving behind his entire world. For a man so big, such food was not going to be much.

“I should have let you explain,” I uttered, not even able to hold eye contact with him.

He gently nudged me with his elbow.

“I had plenty of time to explain. I should have just said it without waiting for your approval. I guess I was too...” He paused, then leaned down from the side toward my ear, lowering his voice to speak.

“Horny to speak,” He finished before straightening up and finishing his noodles. That alone gave me goosebumps. 1

But I could tell it was safe to say that he was not angry about it, not even about the comment.

Usually, the man in my life would always remind me of a single thing I did and make me apologize over and over again.

But this man reminded me of his previous self, the one from when we were friends.

Then he left me, and he acted distant. When I returned, he was rude. So which one was the real Baxter?

“Oh, and by the way,” he said as he stopped next to the bed and turned toward me, “I’m not marrying anyone.”

As soon as he said that, I was not the only one who snapped my head up.

My children looked at each other and then looked at him, too.

“You’re not bringing that bad aunt into our home?” Bodhi asked, and Baxter started to laugh.

“No, there is no need to. People only marry once. And I don’t believe in sharing or being shared,” he replied. 1

The way he said it while looking at me, before sitting down with the kids to help them clean up the mess they had made on the bed, made me happy. 1

Ruby Walker

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242

242—Leaving Everything For Him

Yuvonne:

“Do you think that will be a good idea?” I asked Lady Eugenia, holding the phone in my shaking hands, a **small** bag slung over my shoulder.

I had found out through Lord Eldon that Baxter and my stupid ass Madeline were staying at this motel.

So I took a bus to the end of the border and then had to walk all the way to the motel because I needed to give Baxter the perfect impression that I had left everything behind for him. 1

“Just do as I’m telling you,” Lady Eugenia responded on the other end of the call.

I did not know how much her plan was going to work because it basically meant that I would get tortured.

She wanted me to stay in the rogue community with him and ruin his relationship with Madeline because that would be the only time I could do it. 1

If I was not close to them, my sister would just win his heart.

I needed to stop calling her my sister.

I grunted to myself and reminded myself that she was not my sister and that she definitely did not deserve the respect of being called one.

“Now cut the call, and remember, whatever he says, do not lose your mind. Just play the perfect role,” his mother instructed.

I nodded my head.

I was not sure what kind of master plan this was, but she said that if this did not work, there was another plan.

She also told me that the other plan was quite nasty and that it would be painful, too.

She warned me to make this plan work, or else I would be in a lot of pain with the next one. 1

I did not understand what that meant, but here I was, standing at the counter and asking for Baxter and Madeline's room number.

It was pretty late at night, so I knew they must have had their dinner and would be asleep by now, if rogue people even had dinners.

I was not sure where rogue people ate.

The lady at the counter guided me to the room. I walked out into the cold air and then stood in front of the door.

My fist kept clenching as I wondered what would happen next.

With a lot of confidence and a lot of fake tears in my eyes, I knocked on the door.

I heard the cheers of children from inside, and that confused me. I thought they would be crying, but I guess not.

Of course, why would they be crying? Their mother had stolen someone else's man.

Footsteps approached the door, and I quickly prepared myself to cry some more.

The moment the door opened, I squeezed my eyes shut and opened my mouth to cry.

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242-teaving Everything For Hamm

+25 Bonus

Then I noticed it was Madeline, and my expression went still.

I knew I must have looked bored, and even she could see that I had been about to cry but had stopped.

"Yuvonne?" she said my name bitterly, full of hatred.

“Where is Baxter?” I asked.

I forced myself to cry again and pushed past her, rushing into the room.

And what did I see? There was only one bed, which Baxter was occupying with the children, playing games with them like a father would.

There was also one couch with two pillows pushed together and a blanket.

Ideas started forming in my head, so many that my brain began to hurt. 1

I avoided all of that and rushed straight toward Baxter, who had just gotten up from the bed.

The moment he was on his feet, I crashed into his chest.

Silence followed. I was the only one crying, sniffing, and wailing.

“I’ve missed you so much,” I continued.

I was not sure what they were thinking, but there was a long pause before Baxter grabbed my elbows.

It only lasted for a second, and I thought he was going to pull me closer. Instead, he pushed me back.

“What are you doing?” he demanded, then corrected himself. “I mean, what are you doing here?”

His voice was stern.

I looked over at the children, and my mood soured instantly.

I knew one was not supposed to be nasty toward children, but there I was, directing my thoughts at them anyway.

Then I turned to look at Madeline, who had walked over to stand next to Baxter.

“I left everything behind for you.”

“”

The moment I said those words, I watched Madeline’s face turn pale,

Of course, I was right. That bitch was planning to steal my man forever.

But it was Baxter's eyes widening that upset me the most. I began to wonder what that look meant.

Was he impressed? Was he upset? What was he thinking as he stared at me like that?

"What?" he asked me. "Have you lost your mind? We're talking about the mountains. We're going rogue. We're not going on a picnic." 1

He had already started scolding me, and I convinced myself it was because he was worried about how I would

survive in the woods.

So I decided to ease him a little.

"It's okay. I don't want luxuries. I don't want anything. I just want to be with you."

As soon as I said that, I tried to lean into his chest again, but he pulled back, his hands raised to gesture for me to

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242-**Leaving Everything for min**

step away.

I did not know why, but I had never felt so rejected before. It hurt me, and it hurt my soul.

Ruby Walker

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243-The Past That Haunts Me

Baxter:

I had no clue what had just happened, but the way she barged in, the way she told me that she had left everything behind, it took me a while to even gather my thoughts. And I was beyond pissed at her.

How the hell did she think this was a good decision? How did her parents even let her do that?

“I came here for you,” she snapped at me, almost like she was upset that I was not immediately praising her as if she had done something great.

“But why?” I asked. “Do you not know that life here is not easy?”

I continued, still angry with her.

“I know life is difficult for you, but I don’t fucking care. You’re seeing the trouble, but not my love,” she grunted, making me slap my forehead.

I did not know she would do something so stupid. I wished I had stayed in contact with her so I could have ended things before she did this. And I was exhausted.

“So where am I going to sleep now?” she asked, looking around.

An awkward silence followed. My eyes moved slightly to Madeline, who still had her arms folded over her chest.

This time, she had turned to look at me instead. Her eyes scared me. I knew she would not let me off easy for this.

But I also knew that for now, I could not do anything. She was here, and she had to stay for the night.

Otherwise, there was nowhere else for her to go. Even if she decided to leave, we did not have a car, and letting her wander the woods would be dangerous.

“Does it look like there’s room for another person?” I asked her, irritation clear in my voice.

She looked around the room briefly, then faced me again.

“But I can get us another room,” she mumbled.

“That’s not the point,” I replied, annoyed. “They only let a newcomer stay for two days.”

“Yeah, but I’m a newcomer,” she argued quickly. “I can get us another room, and then you and I can stay there.”

She was too quick to come up with ideas. Ideas that would only make Madeline give me an even harder time.

“I think she’s right. You should go and stay in another room. My kids are sleeping, and I have to put them to bed,” Madeline suggested from the side.

I turned to her. I could tell she was really bothered. But knowing her, this was her way of coping, pushing away the person she thought would hurt her before they could.

It saddened me, not because she was asking me to leave, but because she had been pushed to the point where she chose to walk away before someone replaced her.

“Come on, we should go and get the room before the lady behind the counter goes to bed,” Yuvonne urged and reached for my hand, trying to drag me away.

I freed myself and turned back to Madeline.

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343 The Frist The Hounts Mi

+25 Bonus

“I’ll keep the other key with me. **I’ll** check on **you** and the children, okay?” I told her.

She looked away, her arms folded over her chest.

“Come **on**,” Yuvonne said again, trying to grab my hand.

I freed myself once more. I could not leave while my wife looked so worried.

I walked toward her and, surprising her, leaned down and kissed her on the cheek.

I heard Yuvonne gasp. Even Madeline’s eyes snapped up at me. Her arms unfolded from her chest as I leaned toward her ear.

“If I even touch a hair on her head, I will cut off my hand and throw it to the wild dogs,” I warned quietly.

That was all I said before pulling back and turning to leave. But the comfort in her eyes already told me I had made the right decision.

However, when I walked out with Yuvonne, I could tell she was not happy with what she had just seen.

I got us a room right next to Madeline’s.

Once we were inside, I turned on the light and sat down on the couch. The room was similar to the other one, with one couch and one bed.

“Are you two sharing the couch?” she asked the moment the door closed.

“What are you doing here, Yuvonne?” I asked, my hands resting on my waist.

“I told you. I’m still your fiancée,” she replied. “And instead of being impressed that I left everything behind for you, you look upset. You get close to her, give her a goodnight kiss, and then whisper something in her ear. Do you have any idea how that made me feel?”

She raised her voice, pointing a finger at my chest.

“I’m a married man now,” I said.

The moment those words left my mouth, I did not know what happened, but she looked deeply offended.

“You’re my fiancée. Even when others were marrying her, they were not leaving their woman for her,” she reminded me, and I realized where the mistake had happened.

I needed to give her a clear answer.

“I’m a married man, and I will not leave my wife or bring another woman into my life to make her uncomfortable.”

The moment those words left my lips, Yuvonne gasped and covered her mouth. But before long, she composed herself and reminded me of something I knew would come back to haunt me.

“All this for a woman who told the entire community about your past,” she stated, and my fists clenched.

Before I could stop her, she pulled out her phone. Sure enough, there was a video of Madeline from a long time ago, probably after I had slept with her for the first time.

In the video, she was sitting on the table of her old home, talking to the stepmother she hated so much about me.

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244-Alpha With No Spine

Baxter:

“What are you trying to prove by showing me this?” I asked.

I did not even watch the video. The moment I would, I knew I would be deeply bothered.

The pain would return, and it would not only be about Madeline betraying me, but also about my past.

I had worked really hard to put my past behind me, to be where I was today, to forget those harsh memories.

“Because, Baxter, she thinks very low of you. And if you don’t believe me, guess what? I’ve got another video of her talking about you recently too,” she added.

My heart started to thump in my chest. I scratched my forehead. I did not want to see any video. I guess ignorance was bliss.

“Wow. So I thought you only wanted to give up the crown because you wanted to be man enough to take responsibility, because Bodhi is your child. But now I’m realizing that maybe it’s because you have no spine. You’re proving her right.”

As she yelled those words, I flinched so hard that even she stepped back in fear. I kept glaring at her.

“So you’re angry at me, but not her?” she yelled again, tears streaming down her face. “I was the one who took care of you when she broke you beyond repair. And I’m the one you’re angry with. I’m the one you’re hurting,” she said, pointing at her chest.

Her face turned red with anger and pain.

“That makes me wonder how you would ever ask her ‘how dare you, Madeline? How could you hurt me?’ Because you’re doing the same thing to me,” she added.

I closed my eyes and lowered my head.

She was not wrong. But I had taken responsibility for Madeline, and I was not going to step back from it.

“But unlike her, Baxter, I know the real you. I know you came here because you would never cower away from your responsibilities, and I respect that. That is why I came here. Even when you want to fulfill your

responsibilities, which I won’t stop you from, I still want to stay with you so you don’t lose yourself entirely to her once again,” she said, her voice much lower now.

I agreed with everything she was saying. There was video proof of Madeline belittling me, and then there were the other videos she wanted to show me, but I kept turning my head away.

“Rest well. I need to go out for a run,” I said, reaching for the door.

She rushed in front of me, spreading her arms to block the exit.

“Please don’t act this way,” I told her.

I **still** held a lot of respect for her, but there had been a few incidents that made me wonder. If her parents were so cruel, how had she turned out so innocent?

“You’re leaving me? Why?” she asked.

“Because I need to go for a run,” I replied.

1/2

244 Alpha Wan No Spa

+25 Bonus

She began to shake her head.

“No. It’s because you’re convinced I had a hand in leaking those rumors.”

As soon as she said that, I nodded. That was the truth. I gave her a blunt look, and she hurried to explain herself.

“That’s not the truth. I confronted my parents, and they admitted it was my mother’s doing. She only did it because she was tired of people telling my father that he was not a good father to her. I know she shouldn’t have done that. She made a huge mistake. She really did. But how is that my fault? You know me, Baxter. You know I’m innocent. Forgive me,” she pleaded, tears still streaming down her **face**.

“I don’t know what to say. I just know that I need to go out for a run,” I replied.

This time, she stepped aside. She could tell I was getting more unsettled with every passing minute.

Once I stepped out of her room, my mind wanted to go back to Madeline’s room and confront her.

But then I thought about it and realized that if I did, it would be like acknowledging that I knew everything she had said behind my back.

And if I still chose to be gentle with her after that, I would look like the coward she had told so many people I was.

I would look like a spineless man, and that would bring back so much trauma from my childhood. 1

So I believed ignorance was bliss.

I would continue to act like I did not know, because what explanation could she even give for those videos?

It was definitely her in them. It was definitely her speaking. I had seen her in front of me once, saying all those horrible things, and it was undoubtedly her.

So what could she say? Nothing.

And then I would have to grow a spine, because if she heard me say even one thing that hurt her dignity, she would reject me in a heartbeat. I had seen the way she acted the night before.

For her, her self-respect and dignity meant everything, and I did not want to be belittled again.

So instead of going to her room, I decided to go for a run.

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245-He Broke Off The Engagement

Madeline:

After a few minutes, once Baxter had left and I had put my kids to sleep, I went to the window beside the couch and saw Baxter step out of the room. He did not stay with her.

I shut the window and sat back on the couch, biting my nails.

“He did it for us,” my wolf cheered inside me.

I rolled my eyes at her.

“Or maybe it’s because he’s a responsible man and doesn’t like to do things that are morally wrong,” I replied, gently pinching my fingers and looking away, my gaze drifting around the room.

“Oh, come on. Just say it. You’re happy. He took a stand for you. And he told us he would not touch her,” my wolf continued.

That did not mean all my worries were gone. There was still one big issue I could not ignore. Yuvonne was right in

the next room.

What would happen in the morning? We would be checking out. Would she follow us? How would we live like that?

I could not trust her, to be honest. I knew for a fact that she had only come here to make my life miserable.

Otherwise, knowing her, she would never go rogue. She came here to stay close, to cause enough rift between me and Baxter to break us apart.

Still, knowing Baxter, I was certain he would not act foolishly based on her claims or anything she said. He was always reasonable and responsible.

With that thought, I lay down on the couch, pulled the blanket up to my chest, and fell asleep easily. I did not know why. I just knew that if Baxter said he would not touch her, he would not.

I woke up early the next morning because I had to pack everything and leave for the mountains. I wondered how Yuvonne would act once we left. What if a monster came and took her one day?

My wolf snickered, and I rolled my eyes at her.

My kids sat beside me, waiting for Baxter to arrive. They had already asked about him at least ten times.

“Mommy, where is Daddy?” Bodhi asked again, and this time I knew I could not make any more excuses.

“Is he with the bad aunt? Why is he there? Why isn’t he here?” Elara complained, folding her arms over her chest.

They barely touched the sandwiches I had gotten from the vending machine.

Even when I stepped outside, I did not see him around the room. I did not know if he had returned last night or not. I assumed he must have.

As I was thinking about it, my eyes drifted to the window, and I noticed Baxter in the parking lot. I had opened the window earlier, and now I saw him reaching for Yuvonne’s room.

He glanced at me, then looked away. The way he moved toward her door was urgent.

“Kids, why don’t you wait here? I’ll go see where Baxter is, okay?” I said, gently patting their shoulders as I got up from the bed.

1/2

245-He Prote Off The Engagement

+25 Bonus

I needed to ask Baxter what he was planning.

I stepped out of the room and noticed that Yuvonne’s door was already open. I could hear their conversation from inside, so I walked up to the doorway. Not to eavesdrop, but because I was about to make my presence known.

“You spent the entire night outside,” Yuvonne said.

The moment I stepped into the doorway, I saw her sitting on the bed in a blue dress. Her makeup was done, and she looked ready, almost thriving in the rogue community.

Baxter stood with his back to me.

“Yuvonne, you have to go back,” he said.

The moment he said that, Yuvonne stood up, and her eyes landed on me.

“I know you’re saying this because you’re worried about me, but trust me, I can stay in rogue land too,” she replied instantly, making it clear that I should not get my hopes up, that this was not about me.

“That’s not the point, Yuvonne. And if you understand, then leave. In fact, I’ve already called Ron. He’s sending his warriors to come and collect you,” Baxter stated confidently.

3

Yuvonne’s jaw dropped. She looked upset, or maybe disgusted. I could not tell. The look on her face was strange, almost hysterical. 1

“No, you’re not doing this to me. Baxter, I told you everything last night. How can you?” she said, stepping toward him.

He raised his palm, stopping her.

“The engagement is off. Go ahead, find yourself a better man and marry him. As for me, I’m a married man. And I’m telling you right now, if you try to speak to me again, I will not be kind. Return to your home.”

As he spoke, he turned to point toward the door and then noticed me. His hand slowly lowered.

I gave him a gentle smile, a quiet greeting for the morning, but he did not return it. His expression was hard, maybe because of Yuvonne.

Yuvonne looked at me and then back at him.

“You can tell me to leave, but you cannot decide whether I marry someone else or not. I will stay in your name, and I will wait for you,” she said, sniffing as she wiped her cheek with the back of her hand, tears rolling down her face. 1

But I noticed how cold Baxter was. Once he was done with someone, he was completely done.

And I began to wonder if it was the right thing. Because with me, he was becoming a supportive man. But with her, he was not a good fiancé, 1

Comments

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246

246—Dangerously Serious

Silver:

“Mathew, you must know that I do things a certain way,” Elgin stated.

We were having a meeting. We had returned to our pack because there was no **point** in staying at the guest house anymore. The researcher was gone.

At some point, I began to wonder what they were really planning to do. The sickness had died down, which was why they found it acceptable to kick her out of the pack.

But I knew that if something happened, they would find a way to make her comply and help them without ever stepping foot inside the pack's borders again.

She was practically a rogue now, at the mercy of all the packs around her.

Right now, though, I was in more trouble watching Elgin sit in front of my father and speak to my ex, whom I had been avoiding as if I did not recognize him.

Mathew had not given me any reason to believe he recognized me either.”

We both knew who the other was, but we acted like we did not. Maybe he had moved on too, which seemed like a good thing.

“It's alright. You can show me your ways, and I will adapt to them,” Mathew responded.

Every time he spoke, my father wore a confident smile. I knew my father well. He was placing a spy in the pack

under the name of Mathew.

I was the one who convinced Elgin not to upset my father and to appoint his royal beta.

My father had also said he did not want to completely step back from pack matters yet.

Of course, I did not explain all of that to Elgin.

I only told him that my father was taking a huge step back and that we should not make him feel completely useless.

Elgin agreed. He wanted the position badly.

In the last two days, he had not spoken about Madeline even once, and that alone felt like a positive change.

I hoped Madeline would die in the woods with her children and that useless alpha who had left the crown for her.

“Great. Then we will have no problem,” Elgin stated.

My phone beeped, and I glanced down at it. The screen showed Yuvonne’s name.

She had not stopped bothering me. She had told me she was going rogue with Baxter, and now she was texting again, saying that Baxter had **sent** her back home.

I did not know why she felt the need to tell me all **of** this. She would drain my patience, and I would still have to respond as if I cared.

But I would only reply after three hours. That was the rule.

Even if she was crying or dying, I would not respond immediately.

1/3

+25 Bonus

246–Dangerously Serious

I was slowly cutting back on contact, and eventually, I would stop responding altogether.

I was only replying now because I wanted to get a sense of what was happening with Madeline.

“Alright then. I’ll pack my bags and move into the guest room here,” Mathew said.

The moment he spoke, my heart skipped a beat. I looked up at my father, who was nodding along with Mathew.

I had forgotten that this was how things worked. The royal beta's house had to be close enough.

Sometimes, they even stayed in the guest room until they got married.

"Yes, that would be good," Elgin replied, untangling his legs and standing up to shake Mathew's hand.

After that, he turned to my father and hugged him, sealing the new alliance.

I had just straightened up from my chair when Mathew reached out his hand to me.

There was a silent storm between us as I shook it.

The way he gently rubbed his thumb over the back of my hand made me pull away quickly.

I forced an awkward smile at Elgin, hiding the fact that something was very wrong.

"Um, Silver, why don't you go and show him the guest room?" my father said as he turned his attention to Elgin to discuss when the crowning would happen.

I did not feel like walking alone with Mathew, but now that the attention had shifted to me, I had no choice.

I walked down the hall, with Mathew following behind me.

"This is your room," I said as I reached the door and opened it.

Mathew barged in before me, grabbing my arm and pulling me along with him.

He slammed the door shut, pushed me against the wall, and pinned my hands above my head.

I already knew this was going down a very wrong path.

1

Before I could ask him what he was doing, he crashed his lips against mine.

For a moment, I felt the familiarity of it, the taste of him, and unwanted urges stirred in my body.

But I remembered one thing. His presence was nothing compared to Elgin's.

I started to fight back, and he stopped.

That was when I shoved him away and slapped him hard enough to turn his face to the side.

"I'm a married woman, and I will not cheat on my man," I hissed, fixing my dress as I reached for the door.

Just before I walked out, he said something that made my skin crawl.

"We'll see how long it takes before you give in to your cravings." (2

Ruby Walker

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We Listened to the Darkness by Sorin Pax

247

247—Just Being Friendly

Madeline:

Baxter practically carried her bags outside and pushed her into **the** car that had arrived to pick her up along with her luggage. He said goodbye to her, and she left.

I had expected her to create a lot of drama, but she did not. She just left quietly.

"Thank you," I said, but before I could say anything else, Baxter walked past me and into the room.

"Madeline."

Before I could follow him, I heard Bonnie step out of her room.

“Oh, Bonnie,” I said, approaching her to help. She was pregnant and was almost rushing toward me.

“Who was it?” she asked. “I saw a woman here last night. And this morning, your husband was yelling at her. I don’t want to interfere, but wasn’t she the same woman who was crying at him during the wedding?”

She trailed off, waiting for me to finish the thought.

“Yeah. She’s the woman I thought was my stepsister, and his ex-fiancée,” I replied.

Bonnie nodded. “Well, I didn’t like her. I’m really glad she’s gone.”

Her comment made me narrow my eyes at her before I laughed.

“No, seriously. Some people just bring bad energy,” she added.

“Anyway, are you guys checking out today?” she asked, pouting slightly, looking sad.

“Yeah, but we’ll stay in contact,” I said.

She gave a small laugh that made it clear she did not fully believe that.

“Anyway, I must not bother you two. You will have a lot of things to plan ahead before you leave, right?” she remarked to me with a mild smile on her lips, then I noticed how her smile began to wither.

“Are you okay?” I asked her, reaching over as she placed her hand on her belly and then looked up at me. The fear in her eyes even scared me.

1144

“Are you okay?” I asked again as panic settled in me, my voice sounded much more worried.

“Ah!” she screamed, slightly hunching over and squeezing her eyes shut.

Worry hit me as I started to look around.

“Is anybody here? She needs help!” I shouted loudly.

Panic rose in me as I wrapped my arm around her, helping her move toward my room instead.

Hers was pretty far away, so I had to quickly bring her into mine.

“I do not know. This pain, this is not supposed to happen,” she cried out, screaming and sobbing, and honestly, I felt like I was the only one who could help her in that moment.

Thankfully, Baxter showed up. He had been in the bathroom getting ready for the day when he stepped out and

saw us.

1/2

247-Just Being Friendly

+25 **Bonus**

I had already made her sit down on the couch.

“What’s going on?” Baxter asked in confusion.

“She needs help. We need to take her to the hospital,” I told Baxter, locking eyes with him.

“There is no hospital for the rogues,” Baxter replied.

As soon as Baxter said that, Bonnie’s hand tightened around mine, showing that she was scared.

“I have a few visit passes. If you take me to the hospital, I will give them the code, and they will let me in,” she explained, making it clear that while we were stripped of every luxury, she had still been given a pass because she was pregnant.

Thankfully, there was a pass. Otherwise, I was worried for her. For a pregnant woman with no help, that could be very dangerous.

“I will get your husband and your brother-in-law,” Baxter told her.

As soon as Baxter said that, she shook her head and waved her hand at him.

“There is no use waiting for them. They have left for the woods to find a place with the kids,” she replied, taking deep and heavy breaths.

“Then you stay here. I will take her to the hospital in the nearest pack,” Baxter said to me, and I gave him a nod.

Baxter went to the counter to ask if there was any car they could use. Thankfully, the owners of the motel let us use their car. Baxter took her while I stayed behind with the kids.

I was really worried for her because we did not have a phone or anything. We could not even communicate with each other. If anything, I could only use the motel manager's phone, but I did not know where to call.

So I decided to stay inside and wait for Baxter's arrival. Then the owner started reminding me every few minutes that we were supposed to leave today, so I had to ask for a few more hours. In fact, I requested a few more hours.

And then, finally, Baxter arrived. All alone, though.

1

"Come on, let's go. We have to settle in for the day. We already wasted so much time," Baxter urged, gesturing to me as he stood at the doorway.

I got up and approached him, glancing behind him. When I did not see Bonnie, I could not help but ask.

"Um, where is Bonnie?" I asked.

Baxter stared at me for a few seconds before he cleared his throat and uttered, "I killed her."

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We Listened to the Darkness by Sorin Pax

248

248-We Lost Our Home

Madeline:

For a moment, I felt heat rush to my head before I forced a calm look on my face and grunted at Baxter.

“I am asking you a simple question. You cannot even respond normally,” I complained, and he rolled his eyes.

I noticed that ever since last night, he seemed a little bitter. Although he was doing everything correctly, he was not really himself, or the way I remembered him to be.

“She’s at the hospital,” he replied flatly, then walked past me to grab the bags.

“And you could not say that normally to me?” I complained again, folding my arms across my chest as he carried the bags.

Without responding to me, he tried to move past me, so I stood in the doorway.

“How is she?” I asked, annoyed that I had to press him just to get answers to such simple questions.

“Well, your friend is a bit dramatic. She kept making up excuses after excuses to make me stay at the hospital. So I gave the hospital address and room number to the motel manager. He will inform her husband whenever he returns from the woods. Okay,” Baxter responded harshly.

With every word he spoke, my mouth widened.

“Baxter, pregnant women have issues. The reason she wanted you to stay with her was because she was in pain and probably feeling lonely,” I complained, but Baxter only shrugged.

“Are we going or not?” he questioned, making me stare at his behavior.

“Well then, if you want to be a hero, Baxter, be a perfect hero. Otherwise, do not try to help someone if you are going to leave them in the middle,” I commented, carrying a few bags as I walked behind him.

My children followed us quietly. I felt bad for them.

Baxter suddenly stopped and turned around to look at me.

“Who told you I want to be a hero? I am a coward who cannot take care of his responsibilities,” he remarked, watching my face.

I rolled my eyes and shrugged. “Sure, I can see that is very true.” 2

That comment came from anger, but when his eyes softened and his face showed hurt, I instantly regretted it. Even in anger, I should not have said something like that.

He turned and started to walk away.

I walked behind him. The kids followed us silently too. The walk was going to be a long one. Baxter and I, even though we were carrying a lot of bags, would be fine. But the kids were the ones we had to care for. Thankfully, Baxter did not show any coldness toward them. His attitude toward them remained the same as before. He was very attentive to them.

However, my mood had soured. So after about half an hour of walking, when we decided to take a rest so the kids could rest, I chose to throw a few taunts at him. (1

We sat at the edge of the road, where he opened a few biscuits for the kids. As he held one out for me without looking at me, I grunted under my breath.

1/2

248 We lost Our Home

+25 Bonus

“It seems like you are **just** upset because you had to break your engagement with Yuvonne,” I commented, and **he** finally turned his head toward me, his hand still stretched out with a biscuit.

“What? You think I am afraid of your stares?” I continued, still annoyed with him. I did not understand why **his** mood had changed so much. It had to be that he realized he was stuck with me. His mood had shifted after Yuvonne’s departure. If there were any other issue, he would have told me. z

He continued to hold the biscuit and turned his head away. The way he silently let me stay angry only made me more upset.

After a while, we decided to continue our walk because we did not want to delay it until it got late. So we kept going. We took a few short breaks here and there.

Then Baxter decided to carry the kids. He let one of them sit on a bag as he carried it, while Elara sat on his shoulders. With her hands on his head, she tapped lightly, making drumming sounds, and he only laughed at it.

As for Bodhi, I carried him for a **bit**, but then Baxter took him from me. He looked like a big bear carrying his pups along with everything else.

Finally, we reached the top of the mountain. He put the kids and the bags down, then stretched his neck.

The moment we started walking toward the cabin, I noticed something right away. It did not seem empty.

There were noises coming from inside.

Baxter and I shared a confused glance before continuing forward. We stopped the moment someone came out of the cabin, and we recognized him.

“Isn’t that Bonnie’s husband?” Baxter questioned.

I narrowed my eyes in confusion. Sure enough, it was the man himself, none other than Bonnie’s husband.

N

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We Listened to the Darkness by Sorin Pax

249

249—Played Again

Madeline:

“Hey, Oliver,” Baxter called.

The man stopped and turned to look at him. He noticed the confusion on Baxter’s face before he walked toward us, forcing a smile onto his lips.

“What are you guys doing here?” he asked. Then his eyes landed on the bags.

“Oh no. Did you come here looking for a place? I’m really sorry. We found it earlier,” he added with a shrug, looking genuinely apologetic.

It was devastating. We had thought everything was settled and ready, but now it was going to be difficult.

They had found the place first, and I could tell the kids were inside the cabin with their uncle.

“Yeah, actually, we saw this place the other day. We thought we had it marked for us,” Baxter replied.

It sounded awkward even to me, because how does anyone decide who gets to keep a place?

“Oh. I’m really sorry. I wish you the best of luck, and I hope you’re able to find a home,” Oliver said, gesturing with his hand before turning to walk back.

It felt like they had taken our home, though I knew that was not the case. They had arrived before us, probably with their bags.

Maybe not. If they were already inside, how could we ask them to leave now?

“What do we do?” I asked.

Baxter straightened his posture and stepped forward.

“Oliver,” he called again.

The man stopped once more and turned around, looking tired, as if we were interrupting him.

“Yeah?” he replied, sounding exhausted.

“Are you guys going back? Because you haven’t checked out,” Baxter asked, likely thinking that if they left, we could take over.

“No, we’ve already checked out,” Oliver answered.

Baxter and I shared a glance before looking back at him.

“Remember I told you my brother’s fiancée was going to come. She went over there to check out,” Oliver added, clearly ready to walk away again.

“Your wife is in the hospital,” Baxter announced.

Oliver stopped and turned back immediately.

“Really? Oh no. Which hospital? I’ll go check on her,” he said quickly. Then he added, “And, um, I hope you guys find a home,” his words carrying more pressure, as if he wanted us gone.

The men started to walk away, and now we were left without any hope, I turned to look at Baxter, who sighed. Before we could leave, something else happened.

1/3

249 Payak Aykroy

Someone came out of the cabin, calling for Oliver.

“Oliver, how about we take the downstairs rooms with the children?”

+25 Bonus

My eyes widened when I saw Bonnie rush **out**, looking completely fine. That was when Oliver stopped and turned to look at us, likely realizing she had to acknowledge that we were still there. Both Baxter and I were in shock.

“You were in the hospital,” I said to her.

She followed her husband’s gaze and my voice, then looked at me. I noticed her swallow hard, almost like an admission.

“I came back home,” she replied, blinking several times, as if trying to distract from the lie. 1

“But your husband acted like you weren’t home,” Baxter pointed out.

She rolled her eyes.

“Well, he always forgets about me. Anyway, I think you guys should look for some other place. You already lost this one,” she remarked, shrugging her shoulders arrogantly.

Nothing made sense anymore until Bonnie pouted and stepped forward.

“I told Ronnie and Riley not to tell you about our home. She told you, and you came to steal it from us,” Bodhi accused.

At his words, Baxter and I looked back at the couple. They hesitated for a moment, then Bonnie stepped forward again. The woman I thought I had made a new friend with stretched her shoulders back.

“Well, so what? Being a rogue means you have to be prepared for competition. It’s not my fault you were stupid enough to tell your kids about your secrets,” she commented. All the sweetness she had shown me earlier disappeared.

It finally made sense, but the way she treated us angered me.

“So you weren’t sick?” I asked sharply.

“Sick? Huh. If you want to call it that. And why would you be upset about someone stealing something from you? Didn’t you steal your sister’s fiancé?” she shot back.

The woman who had been so pleasant earlier now sounded bitter and cruel. I stared at her in disbelief.

“Now go. This is our home,” she said, waving her hand at me before grabbing her husband’s arm and pulling him

away.

“You know what?” I turned to Baxter. “I want to build a home right here, right now.”

As I stomped my foot, Baxter sighed. Bonnie stopped and turned to glare at me.

“Well then, good luck with that,” she replied sharply before stomping away.

“Baxter, say something. They stole our home,” I said, slapping his chest with the back of my hand.

He groaned and looked at me. But it had come down to this. I was furious. Everything had been taken from me since I was a kid, and I wanted this home, no matter what.

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We Listened to the Darkness by Sorin Pax

250

250—Losing Everything Once Again

Madeline:

In the last few hours, Baxter and I had worked together to build a temporary shelter.

He leaned fallen branches against a thick tree in the woods, then tied them together with strips torn from old cloth and rope from our bags.

He layered leaves and dry grass over the frame. It was not very sturdy, but it was enough to give the kids a place for the night.

When he was done, he crouched down and started a small fire in front of us.

I wanted to help him, but I was in such a bad mood that I could not bring myself to. 2

He sat beside me on a log, staring into the flames while rubbing his hands together.

I noticed that even after losing the home, he did not look worried, angry, or annoyed.

The kids sat with us, finishing the biscuits and snacks. I felt bad for them. They did not deserve this life.

“So, are we going to start building a home next to theirs by morning?” I asked Baxter, not realizing what I was doing.

I had not been able to pull my thoughts away from that house at all.

I did not know why. She had reminded me of my stepmother, and I could not shake it.

Baxter only stared at me in silence before turning his attention to the kids.

“Why aren’t you talking to me?” I pressed. “Is it because of Yuvonne?” 1

I did not know why I brought her up again, but his silence was wearing on me. I needed someone to talk to me, to tell me that everything would be fine. He had been far too quiet.

“You know what? You should have stayed with her. At least then you would have known,” I said, still talking, when he suddenly turned toward me.

“Madeline, enough,” he snapped.

The harshness in his tone made me fall silent.

“Yeah, Mommy, shut up. You have been very rude,” Bodhi suddenly yelled, shocking me.

1

My jaw dropped as Elara and Gina passed me glares.

“Bodhi, who told you that you can talk to your mother like that?” Baxter snapped at him, and Bodhi’s confidence faded at once.

I did not say anything, because I liked that Baxter stood up for me. Kids should not act that way, and I started to feel like this was my fault. 1

“Come **on**, say sorry to your mother,” Baxter told Bodhi firmly. Bodhi folded his arms across his chest and shook

his head.

“Bodhi, what is wrong with you? Come on, I said say sorry to your mother,” Baxter repeated, and I noticed how upset my child suddenly looked.

1/3

250 toxing very thing Once Agen

+25 Bonus

“**It’s** okay. You do not have to force him,” I said softly to Baxter, rubbing my neck. The whole interaction left **me** unsettled.

The awkward silence lingered between *us* until the kids finished eating and got up to head under the shelter to sleep for the night.

“No kiss for Mommy tonight?” I asked as I watched them walk over to Baxter and give him a kiss.

“No. You are not really helpful,” Elara replied, making the hand I had raised to pull them into a hug slowly drop.

They walked away while I stayed seated on the log, acting as if nothing had happened. I stared into the fire, feeling small like a child who had lost everything.

“I think I should not have acted this way,” I said quietly, looking at the fire. “It’s just that the child in me never really grew up,” I added, admitting it aloud to Baxter. All of this came from the version of me who had been hurt her entire life, who had every happiness taken from her, every home slipping through her hands, never feeling like she truly belonged anywhere.

“You should go sleep with them. I’ll stay on guard duty,” Baxter remarked.

I looked away from the fire and at him, my face filled with confusion and sadness. I had thought he might comfort me, but it felt like even he was tired of listening.

The sad part was that when I was pushed out of the pack and had to live in the human world, I did everything except complain. I never complained.

I let people hurt me, use me, and discard me. This was the first time my emotions had spilled out, and I realized maybe they should not have. 1

“Okay, good night,” I told him, then stood up and walked away.

He stayed outside while I went into the shelter. I did not sleep. I sat there, checking on the kids.

They were restless throughout the night. By the time morning arrived, I had fallen asleep sitting against the tree.

I woke up to my children cheering outside like little birds, yawning and stretching.

They were already awake. My back hurt from sleeping in that position, so I got up from the shelter and stepped

outside.

I saw Baxter standing with the kids, his shirt off. His muscles were tense as he smiled at them, listening to their chatter while preparing something.

Then I realized what he was doing. He was building a home here.

Something inside me snapped, even though I did not want it to.

“We are going to build a home there,” I said, pointing toward the mountain.

Everyone turned to look at me. Everyone except Baxter. He ignored me completely, as if I had not spoken at all.

I did not know what was going on. I thought I had only lost a home, but it felt like everything was slipping out of my hands for no reason.

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