

Football 210

Chapter 210 Family

[15/12/2018,]

The group spent the rest of the afternoon on the road as they headed to a small villa in the Swiss Alps. Where they would be spending their winter holidays together. Both May and Lexi's family would join them closer to Christmas to celebrate together.

All 4 families had grown quite close after the fateful shooting as they supported each other to deal with the trauma. Many times the parents would bounce off ideas on how to make their children feel safe again. Lexi's Mum took the kids on a camping trip in hopes of helping them relax and get their minds off things.

It seems the girls had suppressed their trauma whilst Rakim was asleep but after he awoke they were forced to deal with it. Even their other kids who hadn't been at school during the shooting had to become a tad bit paranoid. Thus they took turns trying to help their kids heal each coming up with different methods.

Surprisingly the most effective one was by Joe, Ben's head of security and also his best friend. When asking his friend for the best way to help the kids get over their fear of guns he said he would deal with it. Next thing he knew his friend took the kids to a private shooting range teaching them about guns and even teaching them to fire them.

Safe to say Ben received a lot of angry calls from each of his newly gained friends. Even his wife made a trip from Munich just to scold him but their newly formed friendship didn't break down because of this. In fact, they became much closer after seeing how the experience with Jo helped the kids.

They no longer feared guns as much having understood the tool and experienced the power it held. Plus their parents had spent many nights comforting each other when they felt helpless, so the idea of breaking their support system wasn't even an option. Thus they subconsciously spend more time with each other and make plans around each other.

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Nestled in the pristine landscape of the Swiss Alps, the villa embodies a harmonious blend of traditional Swiss architecture and modern luxury. The exterior features classic wooden facades with large stone foundations, blending seamlessly with the natural surroundings. Sloping roofs, adorned with charming wooden balconies, offer breathtaking views of the surrounding snow-capped peaks and lush valleys.

Upon entering, you are greeted by an expansive, open-plan living area with floor-to-ceiling windows that flood the space with natural light. The interior design is a tasteful mix of rustic charm and contemporary elegance, featuring exposed wooden beams, stone fireplaces, and high-quality furnishings. The warm, earthy tones of the decor create a cosy and inviting atmosphere, perfect for relaxation after a day of alpine adventures.

The villa boasts multiple bedrooms, each with en-suite bathrooms, ensuring privacy and comfort for all guests. The master suite is particularly luxurious, with a private balcony offering panoramic views, a spacious walk-in closet, and a spa-like bathroom complete with a soaking tub and rain shower.

For entertainment and relaxation, the villa offers a variety of amenities. A cosy media room with plush seating and a large screen is perfect for movie nights, while a well-equipped gym allows for maintaining fitness routines. The highlight, however, is the wellness area, featuring a sauna, hot tub, and a heated indoor pool with floor-to-ceiling windows, providing a serene space to unwind while enjoying the picturesque scenery.

Outside, the villa features a large terrace with comfortable seating areas, a fire pit, and a barbecue, ideal for alfresco dining and evening gatherings under the stars. The garden was a landscape of white as beautiful snowflakes covered the ground inviting a plethora of winter activities.

In addition to its luxurious amenities and breathtaking views, the villa is ideally located for exploring the Swiss Alps, with easy access to ski slopes, hiking trails, and charming alpine villages. Safe to say that Rakim and his family had a lot of activities ahead of them and wouldn't be getting bored.

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The moment Rakim and his family arrived at the villa, they were struck by its serene beauty. The snow-covered landscape, coupled with the warm glow emanating from the windows, gave the place a magical feel. Rakim felt a wave of calm wash over him as he stepped out of the car, his breath forming small clouds in the crisp mountain air.

"Wow," Lexi exclaimed, her eyes wide with wonder. "This place is incredible!"

Lisa, who had been coordinating the trip, smiled at the reaction. "I thought we could all use a little escape," she said. "A place to relax and recharge."

They wasted no time settling into their new surroundings. The living area, with its grand fireplace and cosy seating, became the hub of activity. The girls quickly claimed the media room, deciding on a movie for the evening, while Rakim and Ben explored the gym and wellness area.

Since they arrived late they quickly settled into their rooms with the girls sharing a room with two double beds. Oliver and her family would join them in a few days after she was done competing in her tennis opening. Meaning that the two of them had to share a bed which none of them minded since that's how they spent their sleepovers.

Rakim received the smallest room in the villa with a single double bed just enough for his 6'1 frame. He could have shared a bigger room with May's brother and his friend but he quickly shut that option down. He didn't have beef with them anymore but they weren't that close either so he saw no need to share a room if he didn't have to.

That evening, the family gathered around the fireplace, the crackling flames adding to the warmth of their reunion. They shared stories, laughed, and enjoyed a hearty meal prepared by Lisa and some of the girls as May was kicked out of the kitchen. She was kicked out for her own safety as Lisa was about to lose her patience if she messed up one more time.

Her culinary talent leaves a lot to be desired and no amount of effort was enough to satisfy Lisa. Thus the girl could only lower her head as she joined Rakim in the winter garden. Gazing at the beautiful scenery of the snow and lights from the village her mood was instantly uplifted.

"So how have you been," She asked breaking the comfortable silence which lingered between them. Averting his gaze from the distant northern lights just beyond the mountain he made eye contact with her.

"Okay I guess, but I could ask you the same thing," he responded as he kept his eyes on the tall girls at his side. She held his gaze for a moment before averting it and returned her gaze back to the scenery beyond the glass.

"Honestly, this year couldn't end fast enough, I don't even know how we managed to finish our college applications." She stated with a wry smile before going on to describe how she felt like a zombie just passively going through life after he left.

"I thought I was OK, I mean you actually got shot and I was only grazed but I seriously struggled with my sobriety," She confessed before Rakim had the chance to say something comforting that would probably sound like a cliché.

"I'm sorry I wasn't there, I just had to get away from the noise in the US," Rakim replied his voice taking a bitter tone realising that by focusing on himself he had neglected his friends. Although his actions were justifiable, he knew that he could have visited them during his breaks but the thought of going back filled him with a nauseating feeling.

"No it's okay you needed to focus on yourself, plus it gave me a chance to save myself for once without you flying in for the rescue," replied with a smile sounding genuinely happy at what she had managed to overcome.

Drinking had always been her kryptonite as she could always be found with one or the other in her hand during her sophomore year. She had always been the life of the party and loved the attention but at some point, it became a burden. She needed a pick-me-up to interact with all the people looking to interact with her.

Treating everyone as if they were special quickly became a burden to her mentally. Everything came crashing down at the end-of-year party in her freshman year.