

## The In-Law's

It's been a month since she last saw Knox and Willow was slowly starting to heal. Which meant she only cried every morning, night, and once or twice a day. Knox was her first love, some wounds a person never truly healed from. Willow was pretty sure her husband, who she loved with her whole heart, she found cheating on her for months and subsequently found him making fun of her was a wound that would never heal. She just had to live with the pain. To be honest it was like high school all over again. Rowan didn't make fun of her, to her knowledge anyway, but he sure as hell listened as Regina taunted her every single day. Knox who she trusted with a piece of herself she hasn't given to anyone else, and he just stomped all over it.

Willow threw herself into her work as well as her pregnancy. Her work output was twice what it had been and her boss had given her a bonus which was very much needed since she didn't have her husband's income any longer. She already had to dip into the ve thousand dollar savings just to pay her bills. It also didn't help that her medical expenses went up since becoming pregnant either.

Knox still hasn't signed the divorce papers and anytime she asked him why he hadn't Willow didn't get a response. Then she got an odd phone call the other day from Knox's parents. His mother called letting her know that they hoped to see her next Saturday. Willow was confused, she knew what Marge was talking about. The Fourth of July was approaching and they held a Fourth of July bbq every year. What Willow didn't understand is why they thought she'd be going. Willow debated on going just to see if she could get him to sign the divorce papers.

Her Father had also called letting her know that Uncle James' party was coming up. Willow hadn't gone to the Cunningham's bbq in close to ten years, she wasn't going to start now. Then she received a bill for her doctors and she simply couldn't pay it. So she reached out to her parents to borrow some money. They replied they would gift her some money, if she came to the party. Apparently everyone wanted to see her now that news of her pregnancy came out. Willow rolled her eyes, they just wanted to gossip about her divorce. She reluctantly agreed, to both parties. She didn't have a choice. Willow was drowning here and she needed to get things figured out. Her parents would always help her out, but she had to live so much of her life on her own. When it came to her parents Willow always felt more of a familial obligation to them.

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Willow drove up to the Hayes' house and could see that Memphis was already here, but Knox's car wasn't there. Willow let out a breath of relief, she had some time before she had to face him. She had made quite a bit of food for the bbq like always, as most of the neighborhood turned up for their annual party. While the Hayes weren't rich, their family was highly respected as Jack was a Union representative at the plant Memphis worked at as well.

Willow grabbed the cupcakes and headed to the front door. She normally walked right on in, but she thought it was better to knock this time. Soon enough Memphis opened the door with his amazing smile, and Jackson at his side.

"Aunt Will!" Jackson said as he came barreling at her. He knocked into her almost toppling her, but Memphis reached out putting a hand on her hip steadying her. Why she felt her rising up where he touched her Willow couldn't say. Pregnancy hormones she decided to blame the heat she felt all the way in her cheek bones.

"Careful bud." Then he grabbed the cupcakes leaning close to her.

"Hey you better not eat those!" Willow said then bent down and greeted her nephew. "Hey little man! How have you been?" Willow gave Jackson a big hug and headed back to the car with Jackson chattering the whole time. He told her about the water park as she grabbed the mashed potatoes out of the car. When she turned around Memphis was there grabbing them surprising her.

"Oh thanks." She gave him a smile and he returned it.

"You shouldn't be lifting anything while pregnant," Memphis said while taking off, yeah tell that to my groceries she thought.

"Hey guess what aunt Willow?" Jackson said as he grabbed her hand.

"What?" She asked and they talked walking back in the house. When Willow finally got in the house. Her mother-in-law came running at her and gave her a bear hug.

"Oh I'm so excited for another baby!!" Willow couldn't help but laugh, she really liked her mother-in-law.

"Me too," Willow replied and it wasn't a lie. She always wanted to be a mother ever since she was little. Some one would love her wholeheartedly. She never had that before.

"Despite the circumstances."

"Ma! Really?" Memphis rebuked her harshly.

"Speaking of cheaters, where's Knox?" Willow asked and Memphis smiled while her mother in law didn't look too happy with the comment but didn't say anything.

"He said he was working late and he wouldn't be here until later." Memphis snorted clearly not believing it.

"Memphis your brother would never lie to his mother."

"Sorry Mrs. Hayes but it's a lie. His company never works today, and despite having a new boss I will make sure and ask his boss when I see him at a party I have to go to tonight."

"What party?" Memphis asked.

"Well since your son refused to sign the divorce papers or refused to help with bills I have to ask my parents for money and they are blackmailing me for attendance to a party I haven't been to in over ten years. So I now have to go alone," Willow was always blunt, and while it cost her a lot of friends the Hayes seemed to like her for it.

"I'll go with you," Memphis threw in. Knox stomped in at that exact moment furious.

"You will not go to that party at all Willow, not without me." Willow was furious,

"Then sign the divorce papers."

"No, I want to go to couples therapy." Knox threw in out of nowhere. Willow took a breath and thought for a moment if it was possible. She had one question for Knox,

"Tell me right now, we're you planning on leaving me for Regina Silverton?" Knox's eyes slid away guiltily. "That's what I thought, I'm no one's second choice. You have thirty days to sign the papers or we will settle this in the courts." Willow looked at Memphis, "I would love to go to the party with you. The party isn't black tie, but it's not casual either."

"What does that mean?" Memphis asked with a laugh.

"Probably the nicest thing you own." Willow smiled at her brother-in-law and looked at Knox,

"Are we going to be able to be cordial or do I need to leave?" Willow asked.

"He will cool his temper," her mother-in-law butted in for him.

"Mother!" Knox started but was cut off.

"No! You made your bed and now you have to lie in it," his mother was adamant. Knox started screaming that life was unfair and Willow really saw her husband in a different light. The mood immediately shifted when her father-in-law walked into the room.

Everyone was dead silent, even Memphis stood up straighter.

"What is going on?" He asked in a calm tone. Her mother-in-law gave him a run down of everything that had been said in the last fifteen minutes.

"Knox you know I am very disappointed in you, even more so to find out that you haven't been taking care of your pregnant wife that you claim to want back. As you are not paying rent and living here you will pay the alimony your wife is asking for. The divorce I will leave up to you and her, but as she is carrying my grandchild I want to have a relationship with her. So she will be welcome here anytime she chooses to come and if I hear that you tried to stop her, then you will regret it. Understood?" Jim said in a tone that spoke of no argument.

"Yes sir." Knox said like a scolded child, her father-in-law looked at her and smiled. Her father-in-law was a large man, similar to Memphis and seeing smile at her made Willow smile in return.

"Come Willow, let's talk outside." Willow went outside in the balmy heat and talked to her father-in-law for about an hour. Her mother-in-law joined them soon after with money in hand.

"Looks like you don't have to go to that party anymore," Memphis told her. Willow's face gave a wicked smile,

"But I'm still going."

"What do you mean?" Memphis asked. Willow looked up and saw people starting to come in. The party didn't start until six, but she always showed up early to help cook and set up. Willow sighed,

"I get an invitation to go every year, Knox never realized that they were my Godparents cause he's an imbecile." Memphis laughed at that and Willow couldn't help but crack a smile. "Despite not knowing why I always got an invite to hear how big of a deal the party always was and was dying to go. It was always on the day of your parents party so it was a good of an excuse as any. Now I just want to rub it in his face." Willow paused, "Is that petty of me?" Willow asked and Memphis smiled,

"Yea a little, but no one can blame you. He was going to leave you."

"For my f\*\*\*\*g bully." Memphis was taking a drink of water before he spit it back out.

"I'm sorry what?" Willow sighed,

"If you go tonight you will find out, the woman he slept with and wanted to leave me for was my bully in high school. If he didn't cheat on me I'd feel kind of sorry for him."

"Don't feel sorry for him."

"No she specifically went after him cause he was my husband. As my date tonight you will find out as I'm sure she will hit on you. That and your hot." Willow said as an afterthought, then she realized what she said and started to blush. Memphis started to smirk,

"Oh really? I'm hot am I?" Then he flexed his muscles for good measure and Willow swatted his arms.

"Shut up, you know you are good looking," Willow checked the time. "We have to get going if we are going to enter the snakes pit tonight. Oh what about Jackson?" Memphis smiled,

"It's okay, he's staying with my parents tonight."

"Okay I have to go home and get ready, can you pick me up? Or stop by my place?" Willow asked him.

"Will do." Willow rushed off making sure to say good bye to her in-laws as well as Jackson.

She didn't see Knox which was a good thing as she didn't want to. Honestly she was dreading this party, but she was going to spite her husband. Ex-husband.