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Category: Novel Writing

Trapped Between Two Worlds

Brief summary:

It had been seven long years since Kat and Jack went to Metagalactic Space Camp. The chances of them ever even speaking again were slim to none. They are now in college, where everything is completely different. What they don't realize is, once again, they've been led right into each other's arms. The battle isn't over yet. Just as they least expect it, they are faced with more challenges than they ever had before. Through the conflict, tears, and overwhelming decisions, their love for each other is strengthened, and they vow to stay with each other until the end. Little do they know they are about to face the most agonizing challenge of them all.

Excerpt:

"I don't feel like I should tell you everything yet, just because I feel like some parts of it you need to talk about with your dad. Wait- your dad's still alive and you know him, right?"

Jack glanced up at her and rubbed his forehead. "Yeah, I'm staying with him for the week."

"Ok, good." Maria replied. She paused for a second, then continued, "So. Our mom, Jessica... She wasn't who you probably think she was. I feel awful for having to be the one to tell you. She taught you a lie your whole life. My story with her is basically, when I was five she decided she didn't want the responsibility of me. One night, out of nowhere... She left me. I woke up the next morning and sat down at the breakfast table, expecting her to wake up at some point and come out from her room.

"I waited, and waited, and waited. When I went to go check on her, I opened her bedroom door to find she wasn't there. I was terrified, and searched the entire house to find a note taped on the patio door. It basically said she was sorry but she didn't want me anymore. She had run away and said she wanted to move on and have a better life. I kept re-reading the note and crying. I've never cried so much in my life. I was in a total breakdown. I-I didn't know what to do, or where to go... You see, I was an accident, so I didn't have a dad to stay with.

"I had stayed curled up on the patio crying until that Monday, when my neighbors came outside to go to work and saw me. When they found out what had happened, they let me stay with them until I could find out where to go. I didn't have a phone, since I was five, so my neighbors had no clue how to get in touch with someone to help me. Thankfully, a couple months later, our aunt came by to visit and figured out what happened.

"She took me to her house and kept me safe there. Mom ran away from the whole family. Nobody knew where she was. She left and didn't tell anyone. Years went by, and we hadn't seen her. She stayed missing and totally separated from us... until..." she gulped. The pain in her eyes was strong, and her chin trembled before adding, "She came home with you.

"She promised us she'd be more responsible and pleaded that we help her and include her back into the family. I had a massive grudge and bitterness towards her... I mean, who wouldn't, really? I stayed with my aunt and I begged to stay as far away from her as possible. Which is one reason why I never met you."

As she paused again, Jack asked, almost through tears, "Wait a second... I have an aunt? On my mom's side?"

Maria looked up and her mouth went slightly wide. "They never told you?" He shook his head, and she added, "I can't believe it. Yes, you do. I can't believe they'd do that..."

Jack put his forehead into his hands. How much had he been LIED to his whole life?! His breathing was heavy, shaky, and he blinked through a few tears that escaped down to his chin.

Maria's voice was soft as she looked out the window, "Since she was pregnant with you, she got married to your dad. She kept her promise for a while, until you were fourteen, right?"

Jack nodded. "Then they got a divorce. And fought. A lot." He wiped the tears from his chin and slightly saw his

bloodshot eyes in the reflection of the window. Right now, he didn't care who saw him cry. It wasn't possible for him to hold back how hurt he was.

He looked up to his sister, and asked, "How old were you when I was born?"

"Eleven. She was gone for six years."

"I'm sorry." He said unsteadily.

She sighed and said, "So, they fought, which is probably when she blurted out about me. I still don't understand everything that happened. It was hard for him, though. He had been lied to by the person he loved more than anyone else. Kind of like you. He came to see me to find out if I was real. As soon as he saw me, anger instantly flooded his eyes in a way I didn't know possible. He walked away without even speaking to me. I don't know what happened after that." She looked up at him, and seeing his face of despair, realizing how he felt, the pain, the heartache, the fear, a tear rolled down her cheek.

Jack sat in silence. He slowly blinked away some of the tears that were silently streaming down his face. His voice was breaking as he trembled, "What did I do wrong?"

"It wasn't your fault, Jack. Your mom just--"

He interrupted her, his face slowly filling with fury, "Just what?!"

"You have to understand, Jack, she's a partier, a drinker... She just wanted to go wild with no strings attached--"

"WHAT did she do?!" He went into a yell and clenched his fists.

I have to stop. This isn't me.

Maria brushed her hand through her hair, and tried to stay calm. "I feel like I shouldn't tell you, you have so much new stress added on--"

"Tell me NOW!" He yelled and jumped up from his seat in rage.

"Jack- stop!"

He looked around and the whole café went quiet, staring at him.

What just happened sunk in. Storms of misery and hopelessness came into his eyes and head. Someone coughed in the awkward, embarrassing silence and an employee anxiously approached him. She said timidly, "Sir, is everything alright?"

His breathing went hard again as the room swayed. He had turned into exactly what he swore not to become.

His dad.

"I'm sorry! I..." He trailed off.

Maria stood up and held his forearm. "It's ok. Come on, we should go."

They walked outside and stood beside their cars. Jack paced back and forth.

How could I do that...?

What is wrong with me?

Get yourself together, loser! You failure! How would Kat see you right now?! A maniac?! Dangerous?! A monster?! You made a PROMISE you'd NEVER hurt her. Don't you love her?! What happened to being the strong one? The one who protected her at all costs? The one who would risk their life to save her?! What—

"Jack?"

He darted out of his mind that was slowly destroying him. He walked over to her. His eyes were red and swollen and he slightly winced. "Maria. I'm so sorry. I failed. I should've kept it together. I don't know what happened. I--"

"Jack."

"I'm really sorry. I lost it. I embarrassed you. I probably hurt you. I shouldn't have done it. I tried- I couldn't--"

"Jack!"

"You've been through so much already all I had to do was stay quiet I--"

"Jack!"

He looked at her, his tears flowing down his face as he stopped his rambling. "I'm sorry... Go ahead."

She hugged him. "I'm not mad at you. Your entire world just crashed in front of you. Everything you've ever believed has turned out to be a lie. You were backstabbed by someone you thought you knew and trusted. All your life, in your house, fights have surrounded you and pounded you to the ground. At least I didn't have to see the people I loved hate each other, hurt each other, and all the other nonsense you've been through.

"I get how hard it is. I know how you just want to break down and cry and sometimes not even want to live. I understand the feelings that swarm your mind. I know I just met you, but I can tell you are so brave, and I don't know how you can get through the day. But you do. You're not a failure. I'm proud of you. You're the best brother ever."

He wiped his face with his arm and smiled at her. "Thank you." He said quietly.

"You're welcome. Thank you for being so awesome." She grinned.

He laughed through the shakiness of his tears, "I really am sorry for the outburst."

"It's ok, don't worry about it. Everyone has their breaking point. That doesn't mean you're weak, or cruel, or anything like that."

He smiled.

She paused for a little bit, then patted him on the shoulder. "Get some rest. Ok? You need to relax and take it easy. It's been a rough day."

"You can say that again." He gave a short laugh.

She gave a sympathetic smile, then said, "Here's my number if you ever need to talk. I'm glad I got to meet you, brother. Sorry- I just think it's so cool to say that. 'Brother.'"

"Thanks."

On his way back, he parked in an empty parking lot until he had recovered. He looked at himself in the mirror.

Look at that idiot.

He shook his head. He had to stop doing that to himself.

How did you fall for that? You should've known there was something bad about her. Just like all the things that are bad about you.

He tried to distract himself, but the thoughts kept sneaking back in.

You look just like her. You'll soon act like her. You've already proven to be just like your dad.

You'll ruin Kat's life. You'll make her miserable.

More tears swelled up as it slowly started raining and thundering.

How does she even like you? Your smile is sideways, your eyes are dull, and not to mention your giant ears that pop out from your head like Dumbo.

He looked back to the mirror. They weren't big... Right? He sharply sighed and buried his face into his hands again.

He sat in the old van, all alone in the vast parking lot as his crying started out slow then kept getting harder and harder.

He didn't realize how late it had gotten. The sky was almost black to match the fierce storm clouds that hovered inside him as rain pounded down on the car.

All this stress and chaos on top of everything made him lose it. He got out of the car. He looked around the empty parking lot, with a forest surrounding two sides of it, an abandoned building on the other, and a barely-used road on the last side. Tears streaming down his face, he ran. He didn't know where, he didn't know what he was doing, he just ran as fast as he could into the forest. The pressure on his chest was intense, and once he made it a few yards into the woods, he tried his hardest to release the pain through deep breathes and then letting out a loud, desperate cry as he fell to his knees.

His breath was shaking as a mixture of hard rain and tears fell down his face. He let out gasps of air, and fell to the ground. Should he give up? Lay here on top of the grass and leaves until he faded away?

"JACK!!!" Screamed out a different desperate voice, accompanied by loud, fast footsteps.

He heard the sound, but couldn't move. He was too far trapped in his mind. He felt like he was on another world, like he was just a mist, here for a while and then gone...

"JACK!? WHERE ARE YOU?!" It yelled again. He pushed himself as hard as he could and raised up. He saw a figure running to the forest, through the rain. It yelled his name again.

He squinted his eyes, then gasped and stood up as fast as he could. Dripping wet, he walked to the edge of the forest and realized who it was.

"JACK!" She yelled through tears and ran to where he was and jumped into his arms.

"Kat- what are you doing?!" He cried, holding her as close to him as he could.

"I- I came to surprise you- the funeral was today- I wanted to make sure you were ok- JACK! What happened?! I got there- You'd been gone all day?" She said through a slight struggle for breath from running down through the large parking lot.

He put her down, and she hugged him before saying, "I looked for you everywhere. Then, I saw your dad's car. When I got out, I heard you scream. I thought I lost you, Jack... I can't lose you, I..." She put her hands on his chest and paused, looking up to meet his eyes, "Jack... I love you."

His face melted and he gave a short whimper from all his emotions mixed together. He pulled her up close to him, looking deep into her sea green eyes. He leaned in the few inches and kissed her. It was passionate and full of emotion, and they both needed it more than they realized. She wrapped her arms around his neck and pulled him in closer to her. It was cold, and muddy, and the sun had already gone down, but it was perfect nevertheless. It built

Jack up and put back the broken pieces of himself that had scattered around him. It brought Kat closer to him than they ever had been. She did not know what happened to him, but she knew they needed each other. She needed him. He needed her. And they were together now. Whatever happened to Jack, it was bad enough to break his hard exterior and armor that he had always constantly set in front of him. It was the first time she saw this side of him. He trusted her fully, and for the first time in his life, he was able to show his vulnerable side. He usually hated the feeling, but now, he just felt united with her, closer than ever, and more loved than ever before.

She slowly pulled back and smiled at him. He moved his hands slowly to her face and held it in his hands. He looked dreamily down at her.

“I love you too.” He said softly. She then hugged him and leaned back up and kissed him again.

They were sitting in the rain on the parking lot, holding each other close. They both sat in silence until Jack’s breathing and crying had slowed down enough to where he could talk easily. He told her some of what happened, and why he was gone all day.

“I’m so sorry, Jack. I wish I could’ve been here sooner. That is horrible.”

“You’re here now, though. You came at the perfect time.”

“Just know I will always be here for you. For anything you ever need. Whether it’s three in the morning or midday. Whether it’s because you stubbed your toe, or if it’s something huge and life-changing.” She said and smiled.

“Thank you. I will always be here for you too. Whatever, whenever.” He said and gave her a kiss on her forehead.

Kat blushed and laid her head on his forearm.

“We should probably get out of the rain,” he softly whispered to her.

She totally forgot they were still in the now-drizzling rain at night. “Yeah. Probably.”

They got up and walked to their cars.

“You sure you’re ok?” She said kindly.

“Currently, yes. Thanks to you.” He smiled.

“Ok, that’s good. You go first, I’ll follow you.” Kat added before getting in her car, soaking wet.

“You need a towel?” Jack asked, drying off with an extra one he found in the backseat.

“Oh- yeah, sure.” She said and went over to him.

Once they made it back to Joe’s house, Kat stayed with Jack and the rest of them for about an hour or so, then left to stay at a motel.

“She’s just darling.” Melinda said when Kat was gone.

“Yeah, you got lucky with that one.” His dad said and laughed.

“How’d you both find each other again? I know you used to know each other years ago.” Joe added.

“I don’t really know, we just ran into each other, I guess.” Jack answered.

“Aw, come on now, give the details! You got to make it intriguing! Fascinating! Wonderful! Imagine you’re telling the story to your grandkids or something.” Melinda motioned with her hands in excitement.

He turned to her on the couch, and thought for a moment. “Well, when I first saw her, my first thought was how beautiful she was. I told my friend, Aiden, that I wanted to talk to her. So, of course, he dared me to go up to her, and wouldn’t stop bugging me about it until I finally agreed. When I did, I honestly didn’t recognize her. At first, I even thought she was just a little crazy because when I said hi, she looked up at me and said, ‘Oh my goodness. No way!’”

“I had no idea what she meant by that. Like, no way as in ‘no way, I don’t want to talk to you!’ Or, ‘no way, I can’t believe he’s talking to me?’” He paused for a second, and laughed at himself for not realizing who it was at first.

Then he continued, “After a while, we found out who we both were and after her last class we walked around and got to know each other... Again.”

Melinda and Joe looked at him for a second, seeing if he would continue, but then Melinda said, “Wow, it must be fate! That is adorable.”

He smiled. Maybe it was. If he had the choice, he’d say yes, they were meant to be. But, they still had a long way to go to get to where they started thinking about if they wanted to spend the rest of their lives together.