

Erica O'Brien

Draft 1

*Mother Knows Best*

I warned my son not to go. I told him about that crazy killer "The Misfit". I told him! Why didn't he listen to me? I had just arrived at my childhood home in Tennessee when I got the call. When the officer on the phone said "Ma'am...I'm sorry to have to deliver this news over the phone but your son Bailey...he has been killed." My head felt like it was in the clouds, my legs felt like they had turned into jelly and could no longer hold me up I fell to the ground dropping the phone. My sister Ana and cousin Jenni tried to find out what happened but in that moment I could not put it into words. Ana picked the phone up from the ground, she talked to the officer and got the rest of the information. Ana got off the phone and took me inside with help from Jenni. She sat me down in the living room while telling Jenni to make us some tea. She sat across from me visually upset herself and told me the rest of what happened to Bailey. Bailey had pulled over to fix a flat tire and it was just starting to rain when a car pulled up behind them. A man got out offering to help him change the tire before it started raining too hard. At first I was confused. I asked "If Bailey is dead how do they know all of this?" Ana told me that the kids and their mother managed to get away. As anyone would expect they are extremely shaken up but they are okay. I felt some relief knowing they were safe but I still couldn't understand why God, our Lord, and Savior had chosen to take my Bailey boy. He was my only the son, the one who has taken care of me in my old age. We did not always see eye to eye but I would never expect God to punish me this way. Jenni brought me out a cup of steaming hot tea. I sat in the living room sipping it for hours praying this was all some kind of nightmare I would soon wake

up from. Ana let me be for those couple of hours but later came in to let me know where Bailey's wife and kids are. They were being put up in a hotel for the night and tomorrow would be driven here to my childhood home.

I could barely sleep that night. I tossed and turned all night every time I closed my eyes I saw that monsters, "The Misfits" face. When I finally was fed up with tossing and turning I got out of bed and did what I know best. I prayed. I prayed for hours asking God to show me why this had happened and to give me the strength to get through this trying time. I prayed that God would take Bailey in open arms even though he had started to stray from his religion in his adult life. After praying for a while I was finally able to fall asleep for a little while.

The next morning, I woke up to the sound of car doors shutting. I reluctantly got up and went to look out the window. It was Bailey's wife and kids. I knew that whatever pain I was feeling they were feeling too...maybe even more. I have to be strong for them and I know God will help me with that. I quick got dressed fixed up my hair and went downstairs to greet them. When I saw Bailey's wife you could see it in her face she was lost and not quite understanding what had really happened. I was shocked seeing the kids. This is the first time since they were born that they had been quite. I walked up and tried to wrap them all up in a hug but to my surprise I was rejected. Bailey's wife stepped back starting to sob. She looked at me with disgust saying "This is all your fault. You jinxed us. If you would have never brought up that misfit guy this would not have happened." Her voice was cracking barely able to get the words out. I could not believe what I was hearing. She was blaming me! I stood there staring not really knowing what to do or say. Ana overheard what was going on and came in the room to arbitrate the fight. She sent me to the kitchen to make tea for everyone. Tea seemed to be her go to thing to calm people down. She then brought Bailey's wife and kids upstairs to show them their rooms. After

about fifteen minutes Ana returned with only the two oldest children. She told me their mother and the baby were napping and would be down for supper. The kids still said nothing to me just started at me as if I were the one who killed Bailey. I silently sipped my tea. I was dying on the inside but I knew God would want me to rise above and know this is just the stages of mourning.

Ana had made a beautiful supper. She her famous chicken pot pie, green beans, mashed potatoes, and for desert a chocolate cake. I picked at my plate not really feeling like eating but not wanting to be rude. The kids however went to town eating anything and everything on the table. Bailey's wife came downstairs but could not hold herself and after twenty minutes of sitting there she excused herself and said goodnight. I tried to talk to the kids and let them know that their father was with God now but once again I was ignored. I could not take being treated like this anymore. I slammed down my fork and went upstairs to talk to the children's mother. She was sitting on the end of the bed holding a shirt. Once I got closer I realized it was one of Baileys. She looked over her shoulder and told me to get out that she did not want to talk to me. I stopped putting my hands on my hips. I do not know what came over me next but once I started talking I could not stop. I told her "I understand you are upset but so am I. Bailey was my son I loved him just as much as you did! You can feel whatever way you want about me but to poison those kids minds too is not okay. We need to stick together right now more than ever. You do not have to like or agree with me but you will respect me." She was silent for a little while. Then she stood up came over and hugged me. She was crying so hard I could feel her body heaving. I could not hold it in any longer I began to cry too. We stood there crying and hugging for a while. Finally, we broke them embrace and sat on the bed. We talked for a little bit longer about Bailey and how great he was and how he would want us to get along and be strong for the kids. We decided to return back downstairs and talk to the kids now.

I went to living room while their mother went to the dining room to get the kids. When they walked in the living room I was once again given the look as if I was the murder. I kept quite though knowing this was all about to be straightened out. Their mother explained to them that she was wrong to blame me and that I had nothing to do with what happened. She told them they need to respect and love me because that is what their father would have wanted. They both looked at me reluctantly but then came over to me and hugged me. Their mother joined in and once again we were all crying. This time though I felt a sense of unity and knew things would work out.

In the days following we figured out and prepared Bailey's viewing and funeral. We discussed our living situations and decided it would be best if I still lived with them but also thought about moving. The next couple of months seemed to be all a blur with all of the changes in our lives. It was hard without Bailey being here but we were making it worked. We finally did move. We found a house not too far from Ana's house. It was an old farm house with a wrap-around porch and a swing that the kids loved. We were starting to get use to our new normal...and then one day the phone rang. The children's mother answered it. She began to scream and fell to the floor. The phone call was to inform us "The Misfit" who had been captured and put back in jail after Bailey's death had escaped once again.