

the boy who was left on her porch

She awoke to the terrified crying of whatever was outside on her small, suburban property. It was quite dark from her bed to the front door, so as she slowly stepped through the route, she held her hands out slightly, careful not to hit any walls or table corners. She finally reached the front door after minutes of blindly making her way down the hallway, kitchen, dining room, and finally the entrance. She jumped when she heard her small hound dog barking and whimpering, blocking her from the door.

“Shut up, Max,” she snapped as she gently kicked the dog away. She creaked her door open, and there, protected on her porch from the pouring rain, was a baby lying in a small plastic box. He was more than a few months old and was wrapped in a small, light blue polyester blanket, signifying the child to be a boy.

“Who brought *you* here?” She said rhetorically to the baby, feeling unsettled as to why he was left, but her tone remained calm so she wouldn’t scare him. She picked him up along with the box and set him down carefully on the dining room table. He had stopped crying as soon as she brought him inside, and she could only believe that that meant he felt safe.

She leaned down, and whispered, “I’m gonna call someone. They’re a friend. They’ll know what to do.” She walked back to her bedroom, turning on every light as she went, and grabbed her phone that was next to her on the bed. She dialed.

“911, what is your emergency?”

She answered calmly, “Hi. I’d like to report an abandoned child. I just woke up and heard crying on my porch. When I went over there, the baby was just lying there. My address is 247 Petunia Street.”

“Did you see anyone leaving?”

“No, ma’am.”

“Okay. The police will be there in about ten minutes.”

“Thank you.” She hung up and threw her phone back on her bed. As soon as she did so, she heard a small thud in the dining room. She knew immediately what the noise was. The box fell.

She ran into the room where she kept the child and saw that the box had skidded to the other side of the room, and the baby was nowhere in sight.

“What the fuck-” she thought until she was interrupted by a light, cheery voice on her couch.

“There you are,” it said. She yelped slightly and jerked her head to the couch, where a pale, well-dressed boy sat, leaning to face her, and smiling excitedly. I’ve been waiting for you to come back.”

She backed away, trembling when she noticed what was next to him: the bloody, mangled body of her hound, “What- what’s going on. What are you?”

The boy snarled and revealed a mouth filled with sharp teeth and intense salivation. And through a short hiss, he whispered, “Hungry.”

The boy lunged forward on all fours, and she had nowhere to turn. The most she could do to protect herself was crouch in the corner she was once standing in. She heard her own scream and closed her eyes, and that was all she remembered.

The boy licked his fingers after his catch during his hunt. He had eaten twice in one day, which was big news to him. After he had finished, his body snapped, twisted, and turned, and he grew into something else. A teenager, no more than sixteen. He happily left her home, grateful for the meal she gave him, and moved on to the next house, hoping there, he could grow up to be a man.