Peter Dish Babies

By C. Jade Wyton

After a night of caring for her young son with sensory issues, Tiffany finds herself exhausted. Knowing that her boy must be feeling even worse than she is, she decides to keep him and his brother home from kindergarten for the day so they can all rest and recharge. Soon, however, she finds herself in a predicament as her boys start asking questions about the more conventional family dynamics they always see on television— And Tiffany has to think of an age-appropriate lie to explain to her boys why they don't have a father.

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It had been an awful night and Tiffany was exhausted.

There had been a blackout and Logan had been up all night having a complete meltdown because his bed's water had gone cold without a heater.

She couldn't blame him, of course. It was the middle of winter and the poor boy was half-lizardfolk! And his sensory issues on top of that— *Ugh*. Just terrible.

Terrible for everyone. For Logan. For herself. For her neighbours— For everyone except Trent, who slept like a hibernating turtle.

Tiffany could not even begin to explain the level of gratitude she felt when her neighbour had come over with a hot water bottle and some thick blankets after hearing Logan's wailing. She had been worried they would be angry at them for the noise; but everyone had been empathetic, and done what they could to help Logan feel better.

It had only been after the power had come back on and his bed had heated up again that the poor kid was able to get any sleep.

And so, when her alarm had gone off that morning, she'd called his kindergarten and told them she was keeping the boys home for the day.

She'd managed probably ten minutes more sleep after that before Trent had jumped on her, shaking her and demanding breakfast.

He was easily satisfied with some cereal, before Tiffany pawned him off to his favourite television channel....

Perhaps not the best parenting technique, she would admit; but it was one that meant she got to lay down on the couch and close her eyes for a little bit longer until Logan finally woke up and asked for rice on toast.

Cold rice on hot toast, with melted peanut butter drizzled on top....

Tiffany didn't understand it. But if it meant he was able to eat without his mouth "wanting to run away" from him (as he often described), she wasn't going to complain or tell him no.

And, when he had sat in front of the television with his brother to eat, she was able to lie on the couch again and nap.

She listened as her boys watched their cartoons, and could hear that a new character was being introduced— A newborn baby, it sounded like. Being brought home from the hospital by their parents, and shown to the main character—

'Mum?' Trent's voice asked, and Tiffany half-opened her eyes and turned her
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head to look at him.

'Yes, hon?'

'Madeline's parents just had a baby.'

'Yeah,' Logan agreed. 'They had a baby.'

'So they did,' Tiffany acknowledged. 'Good for them.'

The boys seemed satisfied with this acknowledgement and went back to their show. At least… for a while, they did.

'Mum?' Trent piped up again.

'Yeah?'

'In all the shows, when there's a new baby… there's always a dad.'

Tiffany stiffened, hearing that.

Oh, no.

Oooooh… noooooooo….

'Yeah!' Logan agreed. 'Always a dad! And— And— And—'

Logan stammered for a moment, before pointing to his brother; who understood his assignment immediately and finished the question.

'If both a mum and a dad are needed to make a baby, and Logan and me don't have a dad…. How did you make us without a dad to help?'

Tiffany had not been prepared for that question.

In no way, shape, or form had she been prepared for that.

And she *absolutely* could *not* answer the question.

What the fuck would she say?!

Actually, you have a dad? I just don't know who he is!

Fuck no, she couldn't say that!

But the way the boys were looking at her so… expectantly…. She couldn't *not* answer.

Quick, Tiffany! Think on your feet!

'Oh… uh. With… science,' she lied.

'What *kind* of science?' Trent asked.

'Uhh… Well. You know those little… plates?' Tiffany hurriedly tried to remember the name. *Pe… Peet-something*…. 'Peter dishes? That scientists use to grow things in?'

'Uh-huh!'

'Yeah, I used a couple of them to make you.'

'Really?' Logan asked.

'Yeah,' Tiffany lied. 'I pulled off some of my scales off my arm and put them in some Peter dishes, and then waited for you two to grow.'

'Oh…' Logan looked down at his hands. 'Why am I red?'

'Yeah!' Trent explained. 'Why is Logan red?'

Shit! Shit shit shit— Uhhhhhh….

'Because I got some blood on him by accident when I took the scales off my arm,' said Tiffany. 'And that made him turn red.'

'Oooh….'

'And why are my eyes green?' asked Trent.

'Cos I added too much water into the dish and some algae grew on you.'

'Oh….'

'Okay! Cool!'

The boys, accepting their mother's fabrication of an explanation, happily turned back to the television and continued watching their show.

Tiffany let out a long breath when they did, feeling her entire body relax as she flopped over limply.

Oh thank fuck *kids were so gullible!*

—END—

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