She - Roommates

20081210 : This would be a suitable opening, if Morgan jumped initially to the thread where she was not orphaned and was confronting her alternate there for the first time. Adjustments would be needed to adapt this to a first confrontation with her male alternate.

pages ∙ words

Rain shredded the morning mist. Crisp contours of sun-gilded green resolved from the luminous gray. Her forehead rested on the window frame, taunted by the chill of the glass. Her gaze danced over the landscape, clinging to the vibrant colors in some faint hope of shaking her depression. This was supposed to be a new beginning. Instead it was clouded, damp and miserably familiar. In spite of the antique splendor of the mansion and exquisitely manicured estate, the academy reminded her all too keenly of the orphanage she had outgrown.

A hot sigh clouded the glass.

The aroma of bacon, butter, and fresh baked bread greeted him as he entered his private study, luring him away from the paperwork waiting on his desk. On the verge of sitting down, he shook his head and paced back over to retrieve a stack of files laid out neatly on the blotter. As headmaster of the school, time was something stolen between bites and not something to be found with any convenience. If he did not force himself to read up on the new arrivals, he would find himself ambushed by one unpleasant surprise after another. The better part of maintaining an aura of confidence and competence was preparation.

Especially with the kids he worked with.

With one hand, he diced the eggs and mixed them, gushing yolk, in with the hashbrowns and tabasco sauce. With the other hand, he opened the first portfolio and scanned the vital statistics. Three students had arrived the preceding afternoon and evening, and four more were due that day. The great majority would arrive the coming weekend. There would be close to a thousand students for the summer term, and he had to know them all intimately. Today, his primary concern was orientation for the three new arrivals, once they broke fast and assembled in the foyer, and receiving the next four in the afternoon.

Upon picking up the third folder, he quickly returned to the first he had scanned and laid it open on the table. A quick glance disproved his initial assumption, and further comparison convinced him to wipe his mouth and push away from his breakfast. Closing his eyes, and pinching the bridge of his nose, he summoned his secretary. She immediately stepped into his office, alert eyes focusing on his.

“Naomi, one of the students arrived rather late last night. Can you tell me who picked her up and helped her get settled in?”

Naomi nodded, “Arthur originally went out to pick her up. Her flight was delayed, so Mason went out to the airport to relieve him. Mason said you had briefed him on the arrivals that morning, and that he would take care of all the details.” She paused as he scrubbed his face with his hands. “Is there a problem, Magnus?”

“Yes. There is a problem,” he stood up, and taking his secretary by the elbow, escorted her out into the hall, “but, we might be able to contain the explosion.”

Her gaze turned inward, frustrated once more by a veil of moisture. The orphanage had not been a bad place. Not when compared to the calamities of her foster placements, especially as she grew older. She ought to take some comfort in her new home, lacking as it did the torment of any illusions of family. By this point, people expected her to be a bit odd, and perhaps might overlook her true oddities. Or, like the recruiter she had met with to review her scholarship, have some appreciation for her weird outlook on life. She had been quite excited about her enrollment, until she found herself on the plane and realized that there was no turning back.

She closed her eyes and rocked her head gently against the window frame. The sound of raindrops pelting the estate soothed her nerves. They sound had filled the emptiness of a long, lonely night, luring her from her sleepless bed to the cozy window seat.

Her flight had arrived late in the evening, and everything had been cloaked in darkness when she arrived. So much remained to be seen, she could wait for the day to officially start before exploring her new boundaries. She tucked her chin and hugged the comforter tighter around her body.

“How’s a body to get any sleep with you lurking in the window like that?” a muffled voice complained from the shadows.

Her roommate, she reminded herself, after nearly jumping out the window in shock. Hand clasped to her chest, to verify her heart was still beating, and gulping a lungful of air, she turned and examined the occupied bed. As when she arrived, all she could discern was a vaguely human form burrowed deep beneath pillows and bed covers.

“Sleep is overrated,” she responded, looking back out the window.

“So is moping and sighing,” the other girl mumbled, pushing herself to a sitting position to study her new roommate. “Honestly,” she rubbed at her eyes and pushed her hair out of her face, “I’ll never understand why people get off on being all homesick and—“

The girl in the window jumped again as the other gasped in shock. She let out a throttled shriek of her own when she turned and looked her roommate in the face for the first time. Ten years adrift as an orphan, and seven years living alone with her mother, had left her totally unprepared to confront a twin.