

## First Time Alysse Babysits for the Wilsons

“I’m just not sure about this,” Mrs. Wilson protests as her husband slips on her coat.

“The boys will be fine,” Officer Wilson reassures, giving them a wink.

“It’s not the boys I’m worried about,” Mrs. Wilson retorts, adjusting an earring while their two sons, Joey and Jay, ages five and three, look up with angelic faces. “The boys have been a handful the last few days.”

“Don’t worry, I’m sure we’ll get along fine,” I reassure, unfolding my cars and trains mat.

Officer Wilson checks the time, shaking his head at his young wife. “Enough debate, we’re going to be late,” he says, steering her toward the door.

“You have our number?” she asks over her shoulder.

“Sure do,” I smother a smile.

“And don’t forget to give Jay some milk before bed. He won’t sleep if he’s still hungry,” she calls as her husband herds her through the door.

“Will do. Have a wonderful time,” I call, shutting and locking the door behind them. “Ready for some fun?” I ask.

Something about the way Joey says yes makes me wonder what Mrs. Wilson considers a handful.

While Joey and Jay dart the cars around the mat, I start heating up their dinner. “You can’t park there!” Jay calls out, grabbing Joey’s car.

“I was there first!” Joey protests, grabbing the car back.

“Well, I’m an officer, so you have to move or your under arrest!” Jay shouts as they grapple over the car.

“Can you think of a better solution?” I ask Jay as I separate

them.

“But I want that spot!” he complains.

“You know, I bet you're tired of cars. Why not build some towers?” I suggest, pulling out a box of blocks while Joey re-parks his car.

I resume my position at the stove, pouring a pot of hot noodles into a colander when I glance up just in time to see a large tower topple. Unfortunately, a block bounces up and nails Joey right on the head and crying ensues.

I put the empty pan back on the stove and go over to comfort Joey. By the time Joey's tears have dried up, not only is Jay missing, but so are the noodles.

“Jay?” I call, wandering from room to room. “Jay, what are you doing?” I ask as I reach a locked bathroom door where a toilet just flushed.

“Nothin’” Jay replies as the toilet flushes again.

“Since you're doin' nothin', I don't suppose you can tell me where the noodles might be?” I ask, my concern growing as I hear the toilet attempt to flush again.

I hunt down a key and enter in to the bathroom where Jay stands with an empty colander behind his back, the toilet seat closed.

I don't even ask, I just lift the seat, the evidence not completely flushed away. “I don't suppose you have an explanation for this.”

“Have you seen the tornado?” he asks. “It's super cool.”

I place my hands on my hips, determined to keep a straight face. “I'm sure it's super cool, but now we have a couple of boys who are super hungry.” I hold out my hand for the empty colander, which he hands over begrudgingly. “Wash you hands—you're coming with me.”

“We are we going?” he asks, grabbing the soap.

“To the kitchen where you are going to make some more noodles

...”

Two hours later, I lean against the frame of the door, Joey's hair freshly washed, thanks to Jay's fantastic idea to style his brother's hair with toothpaste.

“Good job, Joey,” I encourage as white foam envelopes Joey's teeth.

Out in the hall, it's quiet. Too quiet. “Where did your brother disappear to?” I ask, my concern growing again.

Joey just looks at me as I head further down the hall. “Jay, where are you?” I check room to room. Finally I find him standing on a chair in the kitchen, a nearly empty egg carton sitting on the table. I walk up behind him just in time to see him drop an egg. It explodes on the kitchen floor.

“Yes!” He spins to get another. He freezes, staring at my feet for a moment before slowly looking up to my face. “Oh, hi, Alysse.”

I fold my arms. “Hey, Jay. I have a new activity for you.”

“You do?”

“Sure,” I smile. “It's even funner than styling your brother's hair. Or dumping pasta into the toilets.”

“What is it?” he asks with some reservation.

“It's called '*mopping the kitchen floor*,’” I hint.

“Oh,” he sighs, placing an egg back in the carton. That doesn't sound very fun.”

“It's a lot more fun than '*Parents coming home to a messy kitchen*.’”

“Point taken. Can't we do it later?” he begs.

I pull out a bucket and two rags. “I think not.”