

Babygirl
by Dave Biscella

Dearest Babygirl,

If you're reading this, you have lived a very hard life, and I apologize for that.

That was the first line of the letter that Babygirl received almost six years ago. And it was right, it had been a hard life. Babygirl was always surrounded by people, but always felt so alone. She was only six years old or so, but she remembers the day she received this letter like it was yesterday. It was at that point that she finally felt like she had somebody. Somewhere, somebody was writing this letter and thinking about her.

Her mentor guessed that she was roughly six or seven months old when he found her, and after about five years he felt she was ready for the letter. That was almost six years ago. Since then, she's recited the letter to herself in the mirror every single morning.

Somewhere, somebody was writing this letter and thinking about her. That was enough to bring purpose to an otherwise meaningless existence.

I hope you can find it in your heart to forgive me. Your father was taken away from us and it wasn't safe for you or I, so I did what I had to do to keep us both safe.

Babygirl had a mother. She has no memories of her, other than this letter, but that was enough. And at one point she had a father. She knew she'd never meet him and be able to form new memories, but that didn't stop her from imagining him. To her, he was tall, handsome,

strong. He had a smile that would ignite the world, with dark brown eyes and hair that matched. He was fun, but knew when to be strict. He was a successful man. His colleagues loved working with him, his rivals feared him. He was a great man.

Probably. At least that's how she thought of him. How is it possible to feel so much pain to lose somebody you've never met?

She still had a mother, probably. At least at the time this letter was written she did. A lot could have changed since then.

In her mind, her mother was tall and thin, athletic with strong shoulders and a stronger heart. Long, dark hair with eyes that looked like they were cut out of the same mold as her father. She was kind, caring, and had the ability to cure the world's problems with her smirk. She rarely smiled big, but when she did nothing else mattered.

Probably.

How could you not forgive somebody so beautiful?

I know The Order will be very tough on you, but I also know they are the only ones I can trust to keep you safe and well. I know they will take care of you.

The Order was extremely tough on her, but it was all she knew. The training, the fighting, the assignments, it was no life for anybody, let alone a child. But, this was her world.

Wake up before sunrise, run a lap around the entire complex, breakfast, three hours of sparring, training, lunch, more sparring, more training, dinner, training, bed time. Every day for as long as Babygirl could remember, this was her life.

There are probably girls her age somewhere with completely different lives. Maybe they're going to school, or watching the shows she sees billboards for while out on an assignment. Maybe there's so much more she knows nothing about, and likely never will.

But Babygirl was alive. Babies left in a basket on a doorstep don't always get to say that twelve years or so later. The Order took her in. The Order raised her. The Order made her who she is now.

The Order kept her safe. The Order took care of her.

Just like Mother said she would. She didn't know anything about her Mother other than what was said in the letter, but she always assumed she had something to do with The Order. Of all places to leave a baby in a basket, The Order doesn't happen by random. You don't look The Order up in the phone book or on the internet to get an address. If you stumble across The Order, it's because you deserved it.

This was no coincidence, Mother knew what The Order was. Maybe her father was involved, or maybe she was?

Maybe someday Babygirl will find out.

Every day will be a struggle, some harder than others, but just know, no matter how hard you're fighting to survive, somewhere else I'm fighting just as hard to find my way back to you.

Every day was a struggle, some harder than others, but they all seemed to get easier after receiving this letter.

Reciting the letter in the mirror every morning was the best part of Babygirl's day. It gave her reason to wake up. It gave her reason to want to survive the day. She needed to get to tomorrow so she could recite the letter. That was her purpose. That was her drive. That was worth fighting for.

And every day was a fight. Whether training, or on a mission, or just trying to get through to the next day.

The days of training were hard, but days of assignments are the toughest, like today.

Babygirl couldn't stop thinking about her Mother and Father, even while on assignments. Even though it's accepted that if you leave for an assignment, you may not come back. You could get caught, lose, or anything else much much worse.

Babygirl had a sense of freedom that other members of The Order didn't have, and sometimes that weighed on her mind. A few years ago, her mentor decided she had grown up enough, and he granted her a blessing with each assignment. From that point on, each assignment could be Babygirl's last if she wished. Upon completing an assignment, she had the full blessing to not return to The Order without any repercussion.

She knew she had the freedom to go start a different life, but what kind of life? She wouldn't know where to start, so each time she headed back to The Order, knowing that any day could be her last.

My heart hurts every second that I'm away from you, but I promise I will find you.

I love you, Babygirl.

Those were the last words she recited to herself every morning. Those were the words that drove her.

As much as she recited those words in her head every day, she was still able to focus. She knew she had a job to do, and it was time. She had reached her destination and it was time to get to work.

Babygirl approached the front door, which is an easy approach to take when you're only twelve years old or so. Nobody saw you as a threat, and who isn't going to invite a young girl in need inside? In her head, she's running over the story, deciding which one she wanted to use this time. Mom's car broke down up the road, can I use your phone? My older boyfriend kicked

me out of the car and this is the first house I saw? I saw you mowing the grass and thought it'd be cool to get to know you better? Any of those always worked. Babygirl worked best when she thought on her feet and let it come out naturally.

While still deciding on her story, she noticed the front door was already slightly open. It was time to focus more. All the recon and research has shown that he will be home at this time with no company. It was the perfect time for the assignment. But, why was the door open?

Babygirl snuck in, quietly, reaching to her back to grab her dagger she's used for as long as she can remember.

Working silently through the house, gripping her dagger tight, seeing no signs of life, no sounds, nothing. She worked up the stairs. The bedroom door was open, she could see into the room and see the curtains blowing from a window left open. Something didn't seem right, but there was a job to do.

Babygirl never backed out of an assignment.

She worked her way into the bedroom, and tied to the bed was her assignment, naked, tied to the bed with his throat slit wide open. Based on the amount of blood and the motionless body, Babygirl guessed this would have happened roughly a half hour ago.

Gripping her dagger tightly, she heard movement coming from the bathroom next to the bed. The door swung open, and out walked a tall, thin woman with athletic shoulders drying herself off from a recent shower.

Babygirl stood and stared in disbelief.

"Mother?"

"I promised I'd find you, Babygirl," Mother answered, smiling wide.