

Reflections Over Jalpeños

by Amika Malone

Leilani helped Hunter into the booster seat and sat down beside him, keeping him from getting up and running around the restaurant. All of his parents (her and Lena, as well as Aidan and Luke) had decided it was in everyone's best interest to have as much one on one time with Hunter as possible before the new baby was born, and today was "Hunter and Mommy Lani" day.

Hunter squirmed in his seat, not happy about being blocked in. "Mommy Lani," he pouted, "I stuck."

Leilani tried to stifle her snicker. "Yes Hunty, you are. It's so you don't get lost. This place is huge," she accentuated the word "huge" by spreading her arms wide, "and people could take you away from your mommies and daddies."

Hunter frowned, "I no want that. My mommies and daddies awe da bestest!" and with that, he turned to coloring his placemat and didn't ask about getting up anymore.

Leilani shook her head with a smile and flagged the waitress over to place their order. She ordered the grilled chicken sandwich with fries, and jalapeños on the side for herself and a grilled cheese kid's meal for Hunter. It seemed like only yesterday that she was making sure to remember bottles for Hunter and now he was eating regular adult food, and they were looking into tutors for next year, and Hunter was nearly four. Her runty Hunty umpkins was going to be four.

It was something she decided not to think about any further just yet, especially since there was so much on her plate. The new baby... oh God, the new baby. Hunter didn't know about the new baby yet.

They had been waiting until they figured out a way to explain it to

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him, since the "when two people love each other..." doesn't work since both parents happen to be in same sex relationships, and trying to explain in vitro fertilization to a preschooler is not the best idea.

She was pulled from her thoughts by the smell of grilled chicken and Hunter going, "Mommy Lani cut pease?" to which she happily obliged, cutting up Hunter's grilled cheese sandwich in pieces small enough for the little boy to eat without choking, then dug into her food, making passes at the bowl of jalapeños in between fries and bites of her sandwich. Jalapeños were, without a doubt, her current pregnancy craving, despite usually hating all things spicy.

"Mommy Lani, you don't eat da spicy stuffs," Hunter was quick to point out, "So why you eatin' dem now?"

"You're right kiddo," Leilani ruffled his hair, "Mommy Lani normally doesn't eat spicy things, but right now she wants to."

"But why?" Hunter said through a mouthful of grilled cheese, French fries, and ketchup.

"Well, you see," Leilani braced herself for how this was going to go. "You see kiddo, Mommy Lani is going to have a baby, and when mommies are having babies, sometimes they want to eat things that they wouldn't want to eat if they weren't having babies."

Hunter made to look like he was thinking about it, "Ohhh... hey Mommy Lani?"

"Yeah kiddo?"

"When da baby comes, can I show it how to do stuffs? Like dwaw, and play wif caws, and stuff?"

"I think the baby would like that very much, once he or she is old enough to do so."

Later that night Leilani was lying in bed, waiting for Elena to join her. She put her hands behind her head under the pillow and turned to face her wife. "So, Hunty knows."

Elena stopped what she was doing and turned to face Leilani. "Oh boy, how did that go?"

"Pretty well. He asked if he could teach the baby stuff, and didn't ask where it came from or how I got to be having it, so we still have time to figure that one out. By the way, you can thank my pregnancy craving for spilling the beans. It had to show up during Hunter and Mommy Lani time."

Elena sat on her side of the bed, "What is your pregnancy craving anyway? Hope it's better than my craving for banana and jam on saltines."

Leilani laughed, remembering the late night trips to Wal-Mart to acquire those items for Elena. "Nah, mine's much more normal than that, but very out of character for me. It's jalapeños."

Elena's eyes widened. "No wonder Hunter questioned it. Everyone knows you like your food as bland as bland can be."

"Exactly," Leilani laughed once again, "It's gonna be a fun nine months."

