

Approx Word
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Like A Good Neighbor

By

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"NO! NO! NO!!!" Erin yelled into the woods.

She was exhausted, Erin had spent the day clearing out the moving truck. The move was long and hard. Not to mention that she had a cat to bring along the way and cater to. The constant meowing and voicing of her discomfort made Erin's temples throb. This was yet another cross-country trip... She transferred jobs, she got the promotion. Erin won the case and bought the truck. Erin was sapped of the dry climate and possessed a hunger for season changes. At the very least, a storm more than twice a year. Erin moved for her own peace of mind. Now that peace of mind was being challenged and on the verge of thwarting her sound evening.

"This is NOT FAIR! I JUST MOVED HERE!!!" She continued frantically. The area was rural. Extremely rural. She swore that she would never again move to a place that was just off the main road... But the price of properties has a way of changing the mind. There were very few lights on the property. She was having that solved later in the week by having more security lights set up and it was for this very reason. There was a single-pole light just on the edge of the property where the driveway started and it beamed down on a figure

"GIVE ME LIKE A FEW DAYS!!! HOLY SHIT WHAT THE FUCK! COME ON!!!" She bellowed, stomping her foot on the ground all the while in her hands a box labeled, 'Kitchen Glasses...

Earlier in the evening, as she was unloading the last bits of her kitchen boxes when she spotted what looked like a wolf. She was excited and immediately thought about tossing out some meat for it as soon as she got back in the house. Her eyes widened with excitement. Thankfully her cat was safely inside. "I promise I'll remember to toss some pot roast & things in the wood!" The huge canine looked as if it pranced at the thought of getting meaty treats... She was

thrilled. Beautiful new home, a more than fair amount of acreage. More than enough to plan a maze or even a garden. And secluded enough for her to run wildly naked in the yet-constructed garden or maze. Erin's primary goal was to have enough privacy for her practice and for her pending parties. The California heat was unbearable, to Erin at least. She didn't enjoy beach weather. Nor the beach, the ocean she appreciated and enjoyed from ports and harbors. Not beaches. It was possibly the culture around it. Having to fit into a beauty standard that was never meant for her. The judgemental and prying eyes over what she was or wasn't wearing. It was stressful to think about. So she tended to stick to rivers, lakes, creeks... the smaller bodies of water. There the standard of beauty was far more relaxed. It was more about the company or lack thereof rather than looking appealing. As much as Erin didn't want to admit it... she loved nature. Just not the creatures, not the six + legged creatures that came with it. But she enjoyed the serenity. The quiet. There was a connection to the enveloping tenebrosity that vibrated her very soul. There was something uncanny in the night symphony. It was an unnerving peace that could rattle bones. Erin's peace was unnerved as she witnessed the wrong that the wolf possessed.

It was a soundless push off the ground. There was something sickening from watching a quadrupedal animal walk on its back legs. Erin's stomach turned, she could have sworn she heard the very muscle rearrange.

"REALLY, FAM! FUUUUCK! WE COULD BE AWESOME NEIGHBORS, FUCKS SAKES!!" She shouted in disgust and disbelief.

The creature howled but it echoed a human scream just beneath it.

"DON'T FUCKING TAKE THAT SHIT AS TONE WITH ME!!!! I DIDN'T KNOW THIS PLACE HAS SOME THIIIINGS!!!! WE NEED TO DISCUSS THIS WHEN YOU'RE NOT LIKE THIS!!! THANK YOU!!!"

With her kitchen items still in hand, Erin turned her back and started walking into the house when the creature went to make an advance. " NO! - WE NOT GONNA DO THAT EITHER, PLEASE!"

The creature halted in its pace- more out of confusion than anything else. Its blackened hollowed eyes could be felt crawling around her person as she stared towering back down. If she was going to get massacred in her new home she was going to make it as inconvenient and annoying as possible. "DON'T TRY ME?? TRY THE LORD, WHO I DON'T SPONSOR!" She stormed into her new home more irritated than frightened of the inhuman presence on her newly acquired property. The sudden turn of events was killing the edible. That more than explained the lack of fucks to give to be frightened or even terrified.

Without preamble, Erin kicked the door closed and pressed her rear against the door. She set the box of glassware down and studiously latched the door and barred it. Placing one of the kitchen chairs beneath the knob. Earlier in the day, she checked the windows; they were latched and locked. There was a security system installed. Thankful the area wasn't too rural. The emergency response time shouldn't be too long if needed. The revolver was in the bedroom. Her cat was staring at the window hissing. On the other side of the glass was pitch darkness that was shielded by curtains. Erin made damn sure those were up before the night. Erin was originally from the South... Superstitions came as soon as the sky faded from its endless blues to its sullen reds... There was always a cautionary tale or any and every occurrence. She didn't have enough fingers and toes to count the stories of shapeshifting beasts. Her grandmother always started the story with, 'The blinds were left OPEN'. So yes, Erin invested in curtains to shield away the night and kept the daylight from seeping in.

She momentarily just watched Arkham. She watched how the fur raised, how her tail stiffened as she hissed and growled towards the window. After locating the .38 bullets, she took the anxious cat and catnip into the bedroom.

There wasn't any use in getting any real sleep that night. So she simply settled on unpacking her bedroom until she had no choice but to pass out from exhaustion. Throughout the night she could be seen looking dramatically towards a door or window half expecting to see or hear something very awake and very wrong on the other side attempting to come through. Thankfully each time... nothing. . She kept moving room to room briskly putting things away, hell even finding the energy to start hanging photos and piecing together furniture. She needed to get some sort of sleep. There were errands that needed to be handled in the AM and she had an appointment with an optometrist. New home, new glasses?

The next morning, Erin drove into town. Surprisingly enough there was a Starbucks and she ordered two extra shots over the legally allowed amount by slipping the barista a smooth ten bucks on the slick. Erin and Beck just became friends... or more or less, future partners in crime.

"SO.." Beck made conversation while they waited for Erin's drink to finish. "You moved into the old Lancaster place?"

"Um," Erin dragged with a cheerfully sarcastic brow raised. "I moved into the new house off of Lancaster? Are you about to tell me something weird like my house is haunted?"

"Oh, no... just that house has been on and off the market for the past year. No one's been able to handle it."

"Handle it?" Erin's quirked causing Beck to giggle. But Erin was curious, especially after the manic bullshittery of last night. There was nothing on her visage or her person that even mirrored that something was wrong. Other than the need for copious amounts of coffee

"Are you talking about how dark it is down the dirt road? It's the absolute Void aside from those yellow flowers by the road. What are the Chrysanthemums? Yeah, it's only darkness. That's getting fixed soon but nothing out of the ordinary." Erin offered with a shrug.

"Okay but, Sis, let me-" Beck paused looking towards the door, a few customers were rushing in to get the morning coffee. "Damn, listen here's my number- send me a text and .. IDK we can get COFFEE and I'll give you the tea on the town."

Erin nodded taking the number before Beck took off. Still waiting for her illegal order of caffeine. She sent her newest acquaintance a quick text confirming her name and number. There was a bit of impatience as Erin was wearing on her as the adjacent barista was taking his sweet time making her drink... 'He better not be having a moral conflict back-' Her thoughts were halted; she could feel someone eyes upon her person.

Rather than turning around or saying a word unkind or otherwise she simply ran her hand on the back of her neck and coughed. A subtle indicator that she could feel the visual intrusion.

"Here you are Doc." The taller barista waved to the person behind Erin. A shorter broader man, rounded from behind and excused himself just before her. "Sorry about the wait Doc, today's been a bit busy. We got backed up dealing with a rather illegal request..." The barista's name tag read Jake. Erin would remember the moment, Jake the snitch barista.

She crinkled her nose at the awkward moment. But it gave her the chance to meet eyes with the person staring a hole in the back of her neck.

"Two extra shots isn't illegal." She replied sheepishly. "It's not like I'm asking for a hit of Molly on the side."

"I would feel more comfortable giving you that." Jake Deadpanned.

"Seriously?" Her brow cocked with a snicker

"Not, surprised." The Doc nodded in thanks for his coffee and a slightly gentler nod to Erin.

Erin waved lowly to the stranger but swiftly turned her attention to Jake. "Uggh, my drink please, I'll slip you 30, next time. I'll ride through."