

Broken – Deleted Scene

In the first draft of Broken, it started with Elena still trying to get pregnant. But that meant it took too long to get into the story because I had to cover the “getting pregnant” part before they took off to Toronto. So the story arc was altered to start with Elena already pregnant. That meant cutting this scene, where she gets the baby news.

Positive

The bathroom door knob turned one way. Then the other. A pause. Then a brisk jangle and a shove, as if it might just be sticking.

“Elena?” Clay’s voice came through the closed door. A sharp sniff as he confirmed the answer before I could. “The door’s locked.”

“Yes, it is.”

A pause. Then another twist each way.

“Why’s the door locked?”

For most people over the age of three, the answer to this question is so obvious it should never need to be asked. But, as always, Clay didn’t inhabit the same universe as the rest of us. My bathroom was the only one in the house with a working lock, and only because Jeremy had forbidden Clayton to break it, as he had all the rest. Even in the early days, though, I’d rarely locked the bathroom. Like the rest of the Pack, I’d learned the futility of expecting privacy around Clay. If he wanted to talk to me, he saw no reason why he couldn’t just walk in and chat while I was on the toilet.

He jiggled the knob again. “Are you mad at me?”

“No, I’m just....just wait. Give me... “I checked my watch. “Two more minutes.”

“What’s wrong?”

“Nothing’s—” Was that a blue line? Did I see a second line beneath the first? I squinted at the strip. No, it was just the lighting. “I’ll be out in two minutes.”

He waited. About fifteen seconds. Then he tried the knob again.

“Did you hear me open it?” I snapped. “Unless I’ve learned Paige’s unlock spell, you’ll hear the click when I open it.

“You’re mad at me.” A pause. “Was it the article? I said it was a good article. Just because I don’t agree with the politics.”

“Have I ever locked myself in the damned bathroom because you disagreed with one of my articles?”

“No, but—”

“Then that’s not it. I’m not mad. I’m not sulking. I’m just... busy.”

I lifted the strip for a closer look. Wait, didn’t the instructions say to leave it horizontal? I quickly returned it to the counter and hunched over it, watching and waiting.

I’d been through this twice. A waste of money; I’d known that even at the time, that had I waited a day or two, my negative answer would come in a few first spots of blood. Even now, I’d rather have waited another few days, save myself that slash of disappointed, but by this point, Clay knew my cycles better than I did myself_. He’d know I was late, and would be trying to hold off asking me to test. He’d last until about the end of the day. Better to have an answer before that than to have him breathing down my neck as I tested.

“You sure you’re not mad?”

I squeezed my eyes shut. “Yes, I’m sure.”

“You sound mad.”

I chocked back the impulse to throw the kit at the door. Twenty seconds left--oh, god, was that a blue line? I blinked, sure I was seeing things, but there it was, a distinct blue line below the one on the tester.

I gripped the edge of the sink to steady myself. A flash of doubt, and I grabbed the instructions, gaze going to the diagrams. Blue line equals positive. Positive means--oh, god. Oh, god.

I glanced at the door. This was not how I'd pictured telling him, but I'd have to make the best of it. I'd throw the door and announce—

The door banged against the jamb, handle rattling.

“Open the door, Elena. If I did something wrong, then get out of here and tell me to my face. Don't pull this shit.”

I threw open the door and shoved past him. He turned, watching me stride to the bedroom door.

“What were you—?” His voice faded as he moved into the bathroom. “Isn't this—? Shit! Does this mean—?”

I slammed the bedroom door behind me.

“Okay,” his muffled voice wafted through. “*Now* you're mad.”

I grabbed my paperback from the desk and thudded onto the sofa hard enough to make the springs squeak in complaint. Jeremy glanced over his newspaper, but I kept my gaze on the book.

Clay's footsteps thumped down the hall, then paused in the study doorway.

“Can we try that again?” he asked.

I flipped the page, and ended up with half of it still in my hand. I shoved the torn half into the back.

“Come on back upstairs,” Clay said. “Lock yourself in the bathroom again and we'll start over.”

Jeremy glanced over the edge of his paper, shook his head, and went back to his reading.

“Please?” Clay said.

I turned—and ripped—another page. Clay sighed, then strode over, grabbed me around the waist, hoisted me over his shoulder and headed for the hall. Jeremy didn’t even look up.

“Okay.” Clay said, plopping me down in the bathroom. “Locked door, take two.”

“This is silly.”

“Humor me.”

He backed out and closed the door. A moment’s pause, then the door reopened, his had slid in and he pushed the lock mechanism into place before closing the door again. I sighed.

Clay jangled the door handle. “Elena? You in there?”

I sighed again, shook my head, then surrendered to the absurdity. “Yes, I am.”

“You okay?”

“Yes, I’m just.. I’m doing something. I’ll be out in a minute.”

“Oh? Okay then. I’ll wait over here.”

A soft thud as he sat down on my bed. I bit back a laugh.

I picked up the test strip and started for the door, then stopped, grabbed the instructions and triple-checked them. Two lines equals positive. *This isn’t rocket science, Elena.* But I’d picked up the strip before it was done. Could that have affected the results? There was another test. Maybe I should try— I closed up the box. This one was right. I knew it.

I grasped the door handle, twisted it and paused. A deep breath, and I opened the door.

Clay started to jump up from my bed, then checked himself and sat down again.

“Everything okay?” he asked.

I lifted the test strip, but the words jammed in my throat, and I stood there, holding it up like a winning lottery ticket.

“It’s blue,” I said finally. As I heard my words, I mentally kicked myself. Of all the stupid things to say. “It’s, uh, there’s a blue line. Two blue lines. That means, well, I think it means... According to the instructions, it means . . .”

“We’re pregnant?”

I nodded.

He crossed the few feet between us in a single stride, grabbed me around the waist, scooped me up and twirled me around, then tossed me onto the bed and jumped onto it.

“You’re serious?” he asked, grinning as he crouched over me.

I gave him a look. Still grinning, he threw back his head and shouted to the ceiling.

“We’re gonna have a baby!”