

71

+5 Points

71

*This emptiness wasn't gentle. Not the kind that lulls you to rest. It was a storm, a relentless tide. Dragging you under with every breath. The silence*

[Ads-free >](#)

*it brought was deafening. Each moment is heavy with what once was. Memories, sharp as shattered glass. Cutting through the fragile veil of forgetting. It wasn't a place to find solace. But a haunting, where peace dared not tread.*

Darkness.

It wasn't the peaceful kind, the one that cradles you into slumber. This was heavy, arduous, and suffocating. Hunter felt as though he were trapped in an endless void, weightless yet crushed by an invisible force. There was no sound, no light, only the cold grip of emptiness that sent him spiralling into fear.

*Where was he? he wondered. Is he dead?*

But then, faintly, he heard something - a rhythmic beeping, distant and irregular. It was both comforting and terrifying, yet it kept growing fainter instead of louder as if he were falling into a bottomless pit.

Suddenly, the darkness shifted, and images burst forth like shards of broken glass, each reflecting a fragment of his life.

The first memory was vivid; it felt real. It was a scene he had once lived, one he clearly remembered. He noted every detail. It was that night. He was a boy again, standing in his father's office, the scent of polished wood and cigar smoke thick in the air. Paul towered over him from his seat across the desk, his expression a mix of disappointment and cold calculation.

"You'll never be strong enough to lead if you let

your emotions control you," Paul's voice echoed, deep and biting. "You need to learn discipline, Hunter. Toughen up."

Young Hunter clenched his fists, his heart pounding with both fear and defiance. He had just lost a competition at school - a simple race - and instead of comforting him, Paul had berated him in front of his peers. Why? Because, apparently, Hunter losing to the son of one of Paul's competitors made Paul look weak. It was a stupid logic, but it was Paul's logic. Hunter being weak would reflect poorly on Paul, and Paul despised weakness.

"You think the world cares about your tears? No, it doesn't. All the world wants to see is how strong you can be. That's when they'll look up to you. So grow up. They won't respect you when you act weak." He slammed his hand hard on the desk, making Hunter jolt slightly. His head stayed bowed, his fists clenched in a mix of fear and anger.

"How do you plan to win Estelle over if you continue being like this?"

Hunter's head snapped up to his father. This was it. Apart from comparing him to his competitors' sons, the other thing Paul excelled at was making



Hunter feel unworthy of Estelle. As if Estelle were some grand prize to be won for Paul's benefit. It wouldn't have irritated Hunter so much every time his father mentioned his and Estelle's union if it weren't clear that Paul saw Estelle solely as an addition to his wealth. To Paul, she was more of a transaction than a human being, and it infuriated Hunter.

"That is your plan, not mine," Hunter said defiantly, finally meeting his father's burning gaze. "I don't have the slightest urge to win her interest." He knew that acting stubborn wouldn't deter his father's greed, but he wasn't about to give in to Paul's wishes. If marrying Estelle was Paul's lifelong goal, then Hunter would ensure that the dream never came true. He would do everything in his power to make Estelle hate him, even if it killed him.

The memory blurred into another, and Hunter found himself seated in the garden. The sunlight shone on the leaves, making them glow under its harsh rays. But Hunter's attention wasn't on that; it was fixed on Estelle, who had just managed to make the always moody Dave chase after her. Hunter knew his father's kindness in fostering the boy was just a ploy to seem generous and mask the blackness in his heart but that was never his

concern, however, as he stood there, reliving his memories, he wished he had.

Estelle's laughter rang out like music. Her chocolate-brown hair caught the light as she spun in circles in her flowy dress, her laughter infectious as she teased Dave.

"Come on, Hunter!" she called, her eyes sparkling with mischief as she beckoned him to join them. "You can't stay serious forever. Even moody Dave is having fun, right?"

He smiled the stubborn urge to defy his father momentarily forgotten. She was his sanctuary, his escape from the storm his father had built within him. She was the little girl he once loved, carefree and full of life. He stepped toward her, but as he reached out to touch her, the scene darkened. Her laughter faded, replaced by the sound of sobs.

"Why would you do that to me?" Estelle's voice broke through the darkness, trembling with pain. They were in his bedroom now, and Hunter recognized the day immediately when his gaze landed on the pink camera on his bed. It was the day he broke her heart for the first time. Estelle stood by the window, her arms wrapped around herself, shielding herself from the horror she had discovered.



"With Carla, of all people? She's my friend, Hunter!" she screamed, her eyes brimming with unshed tears. Hunter winced, despite knowing this was just a memory replaying in his head. His younger self didn't answer. He couldn't, and Hunter knew why. The truth was both bitter and unreasonable to admit - but it was the truth. He had steeled his heart against her long ago, consumed by his desire to defy his father and prove him wrong. Because of that, he had resorted to various acts to hurt Estelle, to push her away, but she wouldn't budge. It was as if she were truly blinded by love, and that's why he had used Carla. Although that was his initial intention, affection had eventually woven its way into his relationship with Carla.

The image of Estelle's heartbreak lingered as the memory faded once more. Hunter found himself back in the void, but this time he wasn't alone. A shadowy figure loomed before him, its form indistinct yet hauntingly familiar.

"Pathetic," the figure hissed, its voice a distorted echo of Paul's mixed with his.

Hunter froze, his chest tightening. "Who are you?"

The figure laughed, a low, menacing sound. "You already know. I'm the voice you've been trying to silence your entire life. The one that tells you the

truth.”

Hunter took a step back, but the figure advanced,

1

Ads-free >

its presence suffocating.

“You’ve failed everyone, haven’t you? Estelle. Your child. Even yourself.”

“Shut up,” Hunter spat, his voice trembling.

The figure’s laugh grew louder. “You think you’re different from me? You’re worse. At least I own my selfishness. You hide behind excuses and blame. But newsflash: you’re exactly like me. Selfish, cold, and incapable of love.”



Hunter's fists clenched, anger bubbling to the surface. "No, I'm nothing like you."

"Really? Then why do you think you're here?" The voice mocked. "Face it," it sneered, its tone animalistically cold. "You let your pride ruin everything. You're the reason Dave's father died. You're the reason Estelle lost her child. You destroyed everything when you allowed your greed to defy your father's wishes and rule over your emotions."

"No," Hunter murmured, the words hitting him like a blow to the gut. He crumbled to the floor as images flashed before him. The figure, whatever it was, was right. He had made mistake after mistake, and now he was paying the price. He truly wasn't different from his father - worse, to be precise. His urge to defy Paul had blinded him so much that he ignored the right decisions and chose wrong, all to spite his father.

"You don't deserve to live," the figure sneered. "You're better off letting go."

The shadow began to consume him, its chillness wrapping around his body like chains. Hunter struggled, his breaths shallow, his vision blurring.

"Give up, Hunter," it whispered. "It's easier that



way. No more fighting your emotions to defy your father, no more guilt." The coldness of each word wrapped tightly around Hunter's throat.

But then, through the suffocating darkness, he heard a voice.

"Be brave and live, even when everything seems scary." a voice soft and desperate whispered.

It was a voice he wasn't expecting in the void of his mind - his mother's voice, full of desperation for him to live. All his life, his mother had been quiet when his father berated him. Yet Hunter had never truly blamed her. She was his mother, after all, and he tried to understand her reasons.

Despite her silence, her presence and love had always been palpable.

The shadowy chains loosened slightly, and Hunter clung to the sound, using it as a lifeline. Memories of her flooded his mind - the way she used to hum while trying to coax him to let go of his anger at his father and sleep, the way her eyes lit up when she spoke about her dreams that never came true because his father deemed them unnecessary and a waste. The way she forgave his father, even when he didn't deserve it.

It was something he never fully understood, but

right there, in that chilling void of his mind, Hunter realized she had endured it all because of him. A mother choosing her child over her own happiness and freedom.

In the operating room, the monitors let out a shrill alarm.

"He's coding," a nurse called urgently.

"Charge to 200," the surgeon ordered, pressing the paddles against Hunter's chest.

"Clear!"

Hunter's body jolted, but the monitor remained flat.

"Charge to 300," the surgeon yelled again.

Hunter's body jolted again. For a moment, nothing happened. Then -

Beep. Beep.

Hunter's eyes slowly opened, his vision blurry. The sounds around him blurred together, distant and faint. But one word slipped past his lips in a weak whisper:

"Ma."

Then, his eyes closed again as exhaustion took over. The heavy memories faded away, leaving

71

+5 Points

him in a calm, deep slumber, aided by the anaesthetics.



2

Comments



10

Vote



Watch videos get points (0/20) >