

178 The Evidence

Amelie sat in the small waiting area of Dr. Bavel's office, the ticking of the clock on the wall echoing her own rapid heartbeat. 1

The fluorescent lights above her buzzed softly, casting a sterile, white glow over the rows of neatly arranged magazines on the table in front of her. But she wasn't interested in any of them.

Her thoughts were tangled, swirling with the doctor's words from her previous diagnosis.

She still couldn't believe it. Two clinics. Two completely different results.

The first one, months ago, had told her she was infertile; but then, the second clinic told her she was perfectly healthy, and the confusion set in. How could there be such a discrepancy?

She knew she had to get to the bottom of it, but a part of her was afraid to face the truth. What if this was a mistake, and she was giving herself false hope? What if she really was infertile, and the second clinic had been wrong instead?

She thought about Liam again, about the struggles he had been facing.

'He finally started therapy to help him with sleepwalking... I am not sure whether this is the right time to pressure him again with such news.'

The last thing she wanted was to add more stress to his life, especially when there was a chance that this whole mess with her test results could still turn out to be a false alarm. Maybe it was better not to tell him just yet. Not until she knew for sure.

Amelie's thoughts were interrupted by the sound of a door opening.

Dr. Bavel stepped into the waiting area, his face ashen. He gestured for her to follow him into his office, his hands trembling slightly. Amelie's heart raced as she got up and walked in after him, fisting her hands at her sides.

Inside, the doctor closed the door softly and motioned for her to sit down. She sank into the chair opposite his desk, her eyes never leaving his. He looked like he hadn't slept in days, dark circles shadowing his pale face. He cleared his throat nervously, his fingers fidgeting with a pen on his desk.

"I'm so sorry, Mrs. Bennett," he began in a low, apologetic tone. "You have no idea how much I

regret what has happened. The other couple involved has already received compensation from our clinic, and they agreed not to make the case public because of the substantial settlement we offered. But...I...I don't know what to say to make this right. I am deeply sorry."

Amelie's expression was cold, her anger barely contained. "How come no one told me anything about this? Not about the diagnosis, and certainly not about the clinic handling a lawsuit over it?"

Dr. Bavel looked down, his guilt evident in his hunched shoulders and downcast gaze.

"I informed Mr. Clark about your test results immediately, and he assured me he would handle it. I was worried when I realized you hadn't returned to start your fertility treatment, and I tried to contact him multiple times. He always said he'd take care of it and not to bother you with anything, so I trusted him.

Then, when the accusations started flying, the chairman ordered us all to stay quiet. I guess Mr. Clark never addressed the issue with you either. I'm truly sorry, Mrs. Bennett. At this point, all I can do is refer you to the chairman, as I am no longer allowed to handle this matter. You and

Mr. Clark will have to be involved from here on out."

Amelie took a deep breath, trying to process everything she was hearing.

Richard Clark. Her ex-husband. The name shook Amelie's body with a wave of disgust.

The man she had trusted in the past, the man she had thought was on her side, had been hiding something so important from her, and all for his personal benefit.

'So it's Richard who is infertile, not me,' she thought, the realization hitting her like a punch to the gut. But if that was true, then how did Samantha, now Richard's wife, end up pregnant? It didn't add up. Unless...

Amelie's eyes narrowed as she stared back at Dr. Bavel again. "So what exactly happened to the lab results? Who switched them?"

The doctor shifted uncomfortably in his seat, avoiding her gaze while hesitating with a response.

Amelie understood why he was reluctant to reveal the truth but decided to press on anyway.

"Dr. Bavel, I will be honest with you... I see no

point in me blowing this out of proportion and putting an end to both your career and closing this clinic once and for all. As you know, my husband is a very rich and influential person so no amount of money the chairman can offer me will be enough to silence me. However," she finally caught the man's eyes and added, "I, too, don't need yet another scandal to handle right now, so everything is in your hands. Tell me what happened to my results and I will make sure that once I deal with this matter properly, I will leave you out of this."

The doctor's face went even paler, if that was possible.

He sighed, then opened a drawer in his desk with a shaking hand, and pulled out a small black flash drive, sliding it across the desk toward Amelie.

"This is a CCTV recording from the day the results were switched. It shows Samantha Blackwood at the lab pickup station changing the labels of the test results and taking the others with her. I bribed the security guard to get a copy of this just in case I would be directly involved in a lawsuit but as it was buried down, all the evidence was destroyed. This is the only

copy. 2

"I don't know what else to tell you, Mrs. Bennett. I'm truly, deeply sorry for everything that has happened."

Amelie picked up the flash drive, her fingers trembling with a mixture of anger and frustration. She clenched her hand around its rectangular shape, a bitter feeling settling deeper in her heart.

'Now this is truly interesting.'

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