

Unbreakable 2191

Chapter 2191

Just as he was deep in thought, his phone rang. It was the maid from the villa. Mr. Schultz, your son is running a high fever. It seems serious. Hes passed out! she said, her voice trembling.

Austins frail image crossed Jarrods mind, making him wonder how Austin could be so delicate that a simple fever could make him faint.

The maid continued urgently, The nanny caring for him is crying and begging to take him to the hospital. What should I do?

The maid didnt dare to make decisions on her own, being just a servant responsible for Austins daily needs. The bodyguards outside wouldnt let Austin leave. If the nanny hadnt knelt down to emphasize the gravity of the situation, the maid wouldnt have made the call.

Jarrod commanded without hesitation, Get the family doctor to take a look. Hold on!

He thought of something and quickly said, Hand the phone to the nanny and let her make one call. Stay close by and keep track of the time.

Understood, sir. The maid was puzzled by Jarrods sudden change of plan, but she had to follow his orders. She hurried upstairs, handed the phone to the nanny who was caring for Austin, and relayed, Mr. Schultz said you can make a call.

The nanny, confused, asked nervously, Why hasnt Mr. Schultz sent us to the hospital yet? Austin is so ill

The maid saw Austins flushed face and felt a pang of guilt but couldnt help. This is his order. Are you going to make the call or not? she asked firmly.

Yes.. Yes, Ill call, the nanny replied through gritted teeth. She knew Jarrod was forcing her to call Nicole. She had told Austin before that they needed to behave, avoid causing trouble, and not make Nicole worry about them.

The nanny never expected Austin to bear her words in mind and endure his discomfort in silence until he fainted from a high fever.

Terrified, the nanny abandoned her hesitation and called Nicole immediately.

Nicole answered quickly, and hearing her voice, the nanny broke into tears. Miss, Austin

Nicole stood up in shock. What happened to Austin?

Austins running a high fever, and hes passed out. Mr. Jarrod hasnt taken us to the hospital. the nanny said between sobs.

Nicoles chest tightened.

After Nicole hung up, Roscoe noticed her worried expression. Is something wrong with Austin? he asked.

Nicole nodded and said, Austin has a fever.

Without hesitation, Roscoe tried to remove his IV. Ill come with you to check on him.

No! Nicole stopped him from pulling out the needle. Dont move. Keep getting the infusion. Ill handle this myself.

Nicole was concerned that if Roscoe went with her, Jarrod, unpredictable as ever, could further delay Austins treatment.

Nicole, filled with worry, reassured him, Dont worry, Roscoe. I wont let Jarrod intimidate me anymore. Ill stand up to him.

She urged Roscoe, Focus on your recovery. Once youre better, well hire a lawyer and fight to get Austin back.

Seeing how determined Nicole was, Roscoe grasped his presence would only worsen the situation. Go quickly. Take care of Austin. Ill stay here.

Chapter 2192

Alright. Nicole left immediately, driving the car Roscoe had arranged for her.

Nicole arrived at the villa to find the guards at the door expecting her. They let her through with little resistance.

As Nicole was about to head upstairs, she noticed Jarrod waiting at the top, seemingly expecting her. Her anger flared up, and she couldnt help but slap him hard. Jarrod, are you even human? How could you do this to Austin?

She raised her hand for another strike, but Jarrod seized her wrist, sneering, So youve decided to come back? Didnt get too cozy with your lover?

Nicole rolled her eyes. Jarrod was being entirely unreasonable, blaming her when he was the one who had kept her from seeing Austin.

Nicole was furious, but her worry for Austin outweighed her anger, and she didnt want to escalate things with Jarrod. Let go of me, Jarrod. I need to get Austin to the hospital! she insisted.

Surprisingly, Jarrod didnt argue with her, loosening his grip and letting her go upstairs.

Pushing the door open, Nicole found Austin lying on the bed, with the nanny by his side.

Hows Austin Nicoles voice caught in her throat at the sight of the frail child.

The nanny turned to Nicole and gently squeezed her hand. Miss, dont worry. His temperature is already dropping. The doctor just gave him a shot to bring down the fever.

Only then did Nicole notice that fever-reducing patches covered Austins forehead and underarms. His face looked more relaxed, his expression less troubled as he slept.

What happened? Nicole asked, confused. Wasnt Jarrod against taking Austin to a doctor?

For years, every time Nicole heard about Austin being ill, she couldnt sleep or eat properly. Although she and Austin hadnt much time together and the emotional distance often kept her from reaching out, she was always deeply concerned for him. She worried she wouldnt have enough time to see him grow up.

It was Mr. Schultz who arranged for the doctor, the nanny explained.

She had also thought Jarrod wouldnt allow it, but after she made the call, Jarrod surprisingly agreed and had the doctor visit to treat Austins fever.

The nanny, having accompanied Austin through similar episodes over the years, recognized the doctors competence.

Within a few moments, the doctor identified Austins heart problem, administered an antipyretic injection, and applied fever-reducing patches.

After leaving, the doctor seemed to have shared something with Jarrod, as Jarrods expression grew more serious when he came back to check on Austin before leaving again.

Upon hearing the nannys account, Nicole realized Jarrod was using Austins illness to manipulate her return. That fcking bastard! Just as she suspected, he was willing to exploit his own child for his gain.

That was why Nicole had hidden Austin away for years, fearful he would become a pawn in Jarrods game.

She hated Jarrod to the core but remained by Austins side, watching over his health.

By evening, Austin briefly woke up.

Upon seeing Nicole, Austin reached out his small hand with a hint of sadness and whispered hoarsely, Mommy, hug

Nicole was taken aback. Austin often clung to Roscoe but rarely acted so needy around her, usually presenting a more mature demeanor.

Chapter 2193

Perhaps his illness had left him feeling lost and vulnerable.

Still, Nicole leaned in and cradled Austin, his small, warm body fitting snugly into her embrace. He clung tightly to her, bringing warmth to her heart.

That deep trust between mother and child made Nicole willing to sacrifice herself for him endlessly.

Roscoe had taught Austin well, and now, in Roscoes absence, Austin had taken on Roscoes role, doing his best to console Nicole.

The nanny looked on with joy. Austin had always distanced himself, believing Nicole didn't love him. What added to the complexity was Nicole appeared distant and cold when around Austin, despite her concern for him, almost as if she were holding herself back.

s

Actually, Nicole didn't want Austin to rely too much on her, so when she eventually had to leave, it wouldn't shatter his world.

Nicole felt her own life was nearing its end, but Austin's was only just beginning. She didn't want to be the cause of his heartbreak.

After the nanny fed Austin a little, the doctor advised them to keep a close watch on Austin overnight because his fever might return.

Nicole immediately decided to stay by Austin's side.

Typically, a fever would strengthen immunity, but for Austin, it was life-threatening because of his heart condition. Nicole couldn't bear to leave.

The maid Jarrod had arranged and the nanny took turns caring for Austin, but the nanny was already worn out. Nicole sent the nanny to rest and she took over, settling into the recliner by Austin's bed.

She wrapped herself in a blanket, determined to keep watch.

Jarrods maid tried her best to help, but Austin didn't accept her fully, as she was new to him.

Sick children tend to be fussier than usual, and besides the nanny, Austin only wanted Nicole. Even at his most difficult moments, he would refuse Nicole, only wanting the nanny.

During the night, Austin's temperature rose again. Nicole patiently changed his compresses and encouraged him to drink water. She stayed by his side all night, and as dawn broke, so did Austin's fever.

Nicole sighed deeply with relief, exhausted. She leaned back in the chair and quickly fell into a deep sleep

When the nanny arrived to take over, she noticed Nicole sleeping in the chair and worried it wasn't comfortable. She tried calling out gently to wake Nicole up and let Nicole rest in bed. Miss? she called, but Nicole didn't respond.

Already in poor health, Nicole was sleeping deeply after the ordeal.

The nanny reached out to nudge Nicole awake, but a firm, lean hand reached her first.

Jarrold lifted Nicole effortlessly into his arms.

Surprised, the nanny stammered, Mr. Schultz

But Jarrods sharp gaze silenced her. In a low, firm voice, he warned, Your job is to watch over Austin.

If it hadn't been for Austin's mysterious crying fits at night, Jarrod would have already fired the nanny.

Upon being brought here, the nanny recognized Jarrod immediately as Austin's biological father. The resemblance was striking, as if they had been carved from the same mold. Even their manner of speaking and gestures mirrored each other.

Chapter 2194

Since childhood, Austin had always been reserved and rarely shared his feelings, likely inheriting his father's temperament.

The nanny knew there wasn't much she could do. She'd heard from Nicole that Austin's biological father was a shrewd man with a strong desire for control.

Nicole had warned the nanny against confronting Jarrod if she ever crossed paths with him. If he was determined to take Austin away, she should let him, knowing that he wouldn't hurt Austin but might harm others.

Thankfully, the nanny had acted wisely, grabbing a pile of medications and pointing out that Austin was frail and only she knew the proper dosage, making her presence by Austin's side crucial.

Only then did Jarrod reluctantly agree to bring her along.

Now in the villa, the nanny got to know Jarrod better through those around him. Though he was strict, he generally kept to himself unless provoked, rules were broken, or lines were crossed.

With Austin now down with a fever, the nanny didn't want to challenge Jarrod outright. She quietly stepped aside, gently urging, Mr. Schultz, Miss Lawrence has been up all night. She needs her rest. Her voice trailed off under Jarrod's intense gaze, and she fell silent.

Jarrod's tone was ice-cold. Stick to your duties. I'm only saying this once.

The nanny stood helplessly as Jarrod took Nicole away, watching as he carefully raised his hand to shield Nicole's head from the doorframe.

All the nanny could do was hope that Jarrod would treat Nicole with kindness.

Carrying Nicole, Jarrod made his way to his room. He kicked the door open and laid her gently on the large bed.

Suddenly, his arms felt oddly empty. He realized he yearned for the sensation of her petite, compliant form against him just moments ago.

Lying on her side, Nicole slept soundly, her disheveled hair partially covering her face and hiding her delicate features. Only her full, cherry-red lips were visible, captivatingly beautiful.

Her lips, naturally crimson, stood out, delicate and lovely.

Jarrod leaned in close, fighting the urge to do more, and gently tucked her stray hair behind her ear.

.

After gazing at her for a long moment, he mused that she should remain this peaceful and obedient forever.

When the sound of the door closing faded, Nicoles eyes opened.

The very next moment, Nicole headed barefoot to the medicine cabinet in Jarrods bedroom.

Nicole knew that to win back custody of Austin, she needed solid proof. She recalled how Jarrod used to take those special pills to keep his mind balanced, but they came from a doctor he saw outside the usual hospital. He had never received a prescription from a hospital.

Proving that Jarrod was on psychiatric medication could demonstrate that he was not suitable to raise the child. Raising a child was risky for someone whose mental health could deteriorate at any moment.

She couldnt find the medicine in the cabinet. Stretching on tiptoes, she tried to reach the top shelf for the medicine box, but it was too high.

Left with no other option, Nicole fetched a stool to retrieve the medicine box.

As she grabbed the medicine box, she forgot she was still perched on the stool. She swayed and was about to fall Silently, she covered her mouth, fearing a cry might draw attention.

Chapter 2195

Instead of falling, she landed in a firm embrace, her heart skipping a beat.

The medicine box tumbled from her hands, spilling its contents across the floor.

Then, a voice from above her asked, What are you looking for?

Jarrods handsome yet mocking face peered down at her.

Caught off guard, Nicole quickly replied, Im not feeling well. I need some medicine.

Whats wrong with you? Jarrod asked calmly.

I have a headache, Nicole lied.

Jarrod picked up a medicine box from the scattered mess on the ground and offered it to her, saying, Take this. It will help your headache.

Nicole wouldnt dare touch it. Who knew what sort of medicine Jarrod might offer? He hadnt even checked what he was offering.

I feel better now, Nicole said, shaking her head.

.

Jarrods smile didnt reach his eyes as he said, Just tell me what you need. Ill find it for you.

As he spoke, he suddenly pushed her against the cabinet.

Ah! Nicole yelled. Jarrod, what are you doing?

Jarrod, his hoarse voice and eyes filled with desire, responded, You know.

s

Anger blazed in Nicoles cheeks. She fought against Jarrods grip, feeling her thigh held tight and her body pinned against the cabinet door.

Ouch Nicole winced. Youre nuts! You cant just touch me like that. Its against the law!

Jarrods sneer quickly replaced the lust in his eyes.

He bent down and grabbed a box of pills covered in strange words.

Holding it up, he said, This is what youre after.

His voice was resolute.

Nicoles eyes widened in recognition. This was the medication for the mental illness she had been searching for.

In front of her, Jarrod defiantly put two capsules into his mouth, chewed, and swallowed.

Suddenly, he grasped Nicoles chin and kised her forcefully, spilling the powdered contents over her.

Hmm Nicole tried to resist, but his grip was too tight.

Chapter 2196

She had to extend her leg and give him a strong kick. But the moment she did, he pinned her down, and she tumbled to the ground.

Nicole landed on a soft Persian carpet. Though it cushioned her fall, the position was still humiliating and invasive.

Jarrod kised Nicole with an urgency that seemed like he wanted to claim her completely.

Nicole bit his lip hard, but he seemed unfazed, biting her back in return.

The pain brought tears to Nicoles eyes and made her gasp.

Jarrod continued, unrelentingly sucking on her wounded Lip.

With a lustful gaze, he licked her blood off his tongue.

Nicole felt disgusted. She wanted no physical connection with this man. Turning her face away, she exclaimed heatedly, Get out! You bastard!

However, Jarrod gave a twisted smile and rasped lustfully, If I hadnt taken the medicine to control myself, I wouldnt just want to sleep with you now. Id want to strangle you first, and then fck you!

s

Nicoles widened in disbelief. Did he intend to assault a lifeless body? How could he utter such horrifying words? Only someone who was truly deranged could say something like that. It seemed likely that Austin would struggle to be like everyone else if he grew up with Jarrod.

Feeling desperate, Nicole fought back and said, Then kill me, or I will go to the police and accuse you of rpe!

Blue veins bulged on Jarrods forehead, and his handsome features twisted into a look of rage, indicating he was about to explode.

Nicole taunted, Jarrod, is that the best you can do? Are you so obsessed with me? Are the women in Ardlens not enough for you? What a shame

She paused and stated coldly, Unfortunately, I despise you immensely.

In a flash, Jarrods expression turned as wild as a beasts. Splash!

Nicoles clothes were all torn, showing off her attractive collarbone and smooth skin. Her waist was so delicate that it seemed it could easily break.

During those months she had run away from Jarrods grip, she had become much more plump, completely returning her captivating allure.

Even when she was slimmer, Jarrods interest in her didnt wane.

Jarrod was drawn to her, her charm to him irresistible. It seemed like she was destined to be his special one.

Jarrod bent down and passionately kised her neck. Her graceful neck was so enticing that he couldnt resist her.

Nicole winced in pain, and her body shivered slightly from the discomfort.

Jarrod suddenly stopped kising, as if the medication had taken effect. He was no longer as aggressive.

You are so resistant. Why did you try to seduce me? His tone was cold. It was as if he wasnt the same person who had lost control moments ago and wanted to fck her.

The effects of the medication were astonishing.

Chapter 2197

Jarrod brushed his fingers over Nicoles lip wound, his eyes dark and calm. Stop fighting for it. Ive said it before that you cant take Austin from me. Given your actions, I will not allow you to see Austin again.

Nicole trembled and looked at him in disbelief.

Jarrod stood up, straightened his clothes with elegance, and said coldly, You can leave now.

Nicole lunged at him, seizing his clothes, and demanded, Jarrod, why?

Jarrold remained motionless, and Nicole, gripping his shirt, shouted, Austin is the child I bore! Youve never even reached out to him! Why do you insist on taking my child away?

Jarrold gave a cold laugh. Nicole, Ive told you before. I can raise him because I am his biological father.

Tears gathered in Nicoles eyes. If you dont care for him, dont harm him. Why force him to stay with you?

Despair shone in her tear-filled eyes. She couldnt comprehend why Jarrold wanted to take Austin away. He was a heartless man. Claiming he loved anyone was absurd, especially her. He didnt love her. He merely wanted to possess her. Yet, he always acted decently. It was absurd that Jarrold could truly love Austin. If he truly wanted a kid, lots of women could have one for him. He was just using Austin to trap her by his side.

Nicole didnt want Austin to learn the harsh truth. Though she detested Jarrold and wished him harm, their child was innocent.

Austin had been curious about his father for a while, so Nicole let the nanny explain that his parents werent together but still cared about him a lot.

Nicole didnt want Austin to grow up with the same hatred that consumed her and Jarrold. She didnt wish for Austin to become isolated, peculiar, and self-loathing due to their mutual hatred.

That was why Austin was content living in the villa. He believed Jarrold loved him. But if Austin ever discovered that he was merely a pawn for Jarrold to manipulate Nicole, it would crush him.

Jarrold, please, let Austin go, Nicole said wearily. She had exhausted most of her energy in the struggle. Now, even small movements caused her great pain. Her complexion was pale, enhancing her delicate appearance.

Jarrold watched her with intense eyes and offered, You have a choice.

He repeated, Nicole, you can choose to allow Austin to grow up with his parents. This is the last chance Im giving you.

Jarrold would overlook Nicoles past with Roscoe if she remained by his side. Hed gladly let Roscoe off the

hook if shed just come back to him. Even though he felt nothing for Austin, he would never let it show. He was heartless and merciless, yet he knew how to play his roles well. He could pretend to be a caring father. All of this hinged on her returning to him. Without it, there would be nothing.

He would never allow Nicole to marry another man and take his child with her. Just the thought made his blood boil, and he wished he could tear that man apart.

Nicole, Im serious this time, Jarrold stated icily, as though issuing a final warning. If you continue to oppose me, you will permanently lose any right to be with Austin. You know I have the means to ensure that.

Jarrold walked away without looking back.

Exhausted, Nicole collapsed to the ground, fists clenched and Lips quivering, yet her eyes blazed with defiance. She'd never allow Austin to live with that devil. She would protect Austin from any psychological harm.

As Nicole left the villa, the nanny was at the window, giving Nicole a discreet signal. This was their covert way of communicating that Austin was okay. This was their typical secret sign. When it was inconvenient for them to meet, the nanny would signal from afar, letting Nicole know Austin was okay.

Nicole felt relieved. With the nanny around, Austin would be safe and sound. She had carefully chosen this nanny, so she didn't worry much about Austin's well-being. The nanny cherished Austin as if he were her own child.

Nicole stayed quiet in the car. When she got out and confirmed no one was tailing her, she still felt uneasy. So, she went to the ladies room to make a call.

Hello? a sweet and gentle voice answered

Chapter 2198

Tears filled Nicole's eyes. Raegan, this is Nicole.

Nicole, where are you now? Raegan didn't realize Nicole was calling because she had a new number. But when she heard Nicole's voice, she got excited.

I'm in Ardlens now, Nicole replied.

Tell me exactly where you are. I'm coming to you right now, Raegan responded eagerly.

Nicole's spirits lifted considerably. After all, she could rely on a trustworthy friend. For a moment, she yearned to share all her troubles and complaints with Raegan, just like in old times.

Just then, a child's voice chirped from the other end, Mommy Mommy

Raegan responded softly, Baby, go play with the nanny for a bit. I'm talking to a dear friend right now. I'll join you soon, okay?

Oh the little one on the line babbled adorably, not yet fluent in speech.

Nicole realized that Raegan had two babies who were still breastfeeding. This must be one of them. She felt glad for her best friend, who was living a happy life.

Nicole bit back on her own grievances. Her troubles and misfortunes were hers to bear, and Raegan couldn't resolve them.

Jarrold was a cunning man who covered his tracks well, and he was a friend of Mitchel's. Nicole didn't want to put Raegan in an awkward position. She said, Raegan, I still have some things to sort out. Let's catch up on old times later. Right now, I need your help.

Raegan sounded slightly disappointed but quickly recovered. What do you need?

I need to find a reliable testing laboratory. I want to have some medication tested.

Okay, Ill ask my husband to handle it. He knows people in that field. Raegan agreed immediately, not even questioning the specifics of Nicoles request. It was the deepest trust between close friends, without needing any words.

Ill make sure my husband keeps it confidential, Raegan added. She understood the situation between Nicole and Jarrod. Since Mitchel was Jarrods friend, she had to stay away from Jarrod, as Nicole had requested.

Since marrying, Mitchel has scaled back his social life. He rarely attended gatherings unless necessary. Each evening, he carried home his unfinished office work, determined to be a great father. Hed tuck the twins in and share bedtime stories with Janey. After the children were asleep, hed go to his study and work until midnight.

Raegan often felt guilty seeing him so worn, but Mitchel would reassure her with a hug, saying he wa

s happy. No matter what he accomplished, they would always be happy with him.

On the phone, Nicole expressed her gratitude, Thank you, Raegan.

Dont mention it. When youre done with work, Ill introduce you to my kids. You havent met them yet, and Janey always asks about you.

Sure, I will.

After ending the call, Nicole felt a significant weight lift off her shoulders. There was no need for lengthy conversations. She and Raegan understood each other well.

Nicole had a pill to analyze its content. Just then, she slyly tucked it into her palm while Jarrod wasnt looking. If the analysis confirmed that the pills contents matched what was in Jarrods system, it would strengthen her case for Austins custody.

Jarrod said he offered her one final chance, but she wasnt going to give him one. If she stumbled, shed rise once more. She was determined not to give up without a fight!

Meanwhile, at Serenity Villas.

Chapter 2199

That evening, when Mitchel returned, Raegan briefed him about the need for a testing agency.

Mitchel didnt ask any questions. He simply had Matteo send the agencys address to Raegan and take care of the arrangements.

Raegan, delighted, grasped Mitchels face and planted a kis on him, saying sweetly, Thank you, honey.

She was just about to step out and call Nicole.

Mitchel grabbed her, pulled her onto his lap, and teased, Thats it? Thats how you thank me?

Mitchels gaze was deep and exploring, as though he could look right through Raegan.

Raegan instinctively checked her appearance. The earlier commotion had left her towel slightly uneven.

Mitchels schedules with business trips and Raegans caring for the babies had kept them from being intimate for nearly half a month.

Raegan blushed and quickly said, Ill go check if the little ones are asleep

As she moved to turn around, Mitchel swiftly pulled her back, settling her securely on his lap. His voice was smooth and rich, reminiscent of a cello on a lazy afternoon. The babies are with my mom next door, and Janey's there too. They're not here tonight

While Mitchel spoke, his large hand gently held her waist, his other arm supporting him against the desk, effectively pinning her against it.

Raegans cheeks turned a deep red as she whispered, No, this is the study. The servants might see us They're all on vacation, Mitchel informed her, loosening the only knot on her robe.

Her robe slipped to the floor, her hair spilling over the antique desk, casting a spell of allure.

.

Vacation Raegan murmured, her cheeks glowing bright red, her heartbeat racing.

I arranged it, Mitchel whispered, leaning in. He planted kisses on her neck and collarbone, marking her skin with gentle nips and sucks.

Mh Honey Raegans voice was soft.

Tonight, you can express whatever you want. His voice grew raspy.

Theres nobody here.

Mitchel made tonight his alone time with Raegan with every servant away on vacation and their children taken next door by Luciana. All arrangements were made earlier in the day.

At Mitchels request to take the children to her villa, Luciana quickly grasped the situation and gladly agreed to take care of them for the night.

Lets go back to the room Honey Raegan shyly covered her face with her hands.

But Mitchel didnt allow her to hide, leaning in to kis her deeply, pinning her hands down on the desk.

The room? he murmured seductively. Or would you prefer the floor-to-ceiling windows, the bathroom, or the kitchen counter?

Chapter 2200

Faced with such a bold question, Raegan found herself unable to respond.

Mitchel's passion knew no bounds. They had been adventurous almost five times a week since their marriage.

Mitchel's business trip this time had been their longest time apart since their wedding.

Mitchel was more wild and eager than ever, his eyes alight with a dark intensity. With a quick pull, he adjusted her position.

Mitchel Raegan exclaimed in surprise.

It can't hold back any longer. His raspy voice made her pulse racing. Well start here, then explore the other spots

His lips claimed hers again.

Mmh His intense yet gentle kiss consumed Raegan's soft cries.

Passion ignited in every corner of the room, pulsating with intensity.

Late into the night, Nicole received the address from Raegan.

Raegan's voice was so rough that it was barely recognizable, a sign all too familiar to those who had experienced such nights.

Raegan was living a blissful life, and Nicole was happy for her.

Mitchel was a kind man, ready to give up everything, even his life, just for Raegan. Not many men could match such dedication. A man like Mitchel truly deserved Raegan's whole-hearted devotion.

.

Furthermore, Mitchel was an excellent father to their children.

Nicole had once seen him at a social event, pushing a twin stroller with one hand and holding Jane's hand with the other, always alert to any danger. His attentiveness as a father was impressive.

Children nurtured by such emotionally stable parents were bound to thrive.

Jarrold, on the other hand, was a contrast. He struggled to manage himself, much less raise a child effectively.

Nicole feared that if Austin ever saw that side of Jarrold, it might negatively affect him forever.

Nicole delivered the medicine to the testing center Raegan had recommended, secretly pledging to protect Austin from that situation.

On her way home, Nicole got a message from Roscoe. I've gone abroad for treatment. Don't worry.

Upon reading, Nicole found something about the message seemed off.

They had a secret code. Their messages never included punctuation at the end. This message had a period, clearly indicating it wasn't Roscoe who sent it.

Plus, if Roscoe were truly going for treatment abroad, he would have called or met her to discuss it, not just sent a brief text.

Nicole furrowed her brow, feeling a deep sense of unease in her heart. She quickly hailed a taxi and made her way to the hospital where Roscoe was supposed to be.