

Unconscious 851

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Theodore understood all too well Ariana's profound Longing to become a mother, and the mere thought of her enduring this pain tore at his heartstrings. He dreaded the idea of her making a self-sacrificing choice to protect their unborn children, even if it meant compromising her own well-being.

With a heavy heart, Theodore couldn't bring himself to share this heart-wrenching truth with Ariana. Instead, he chose to bear the burden of this information alone, concealing his own emotional turmoil behind a facade of smiles as they continued their day together.

Yet, deep within, Theodore grappled with an overwhelming sense of guilt. He couldn't shake the gnawing feeling that, in due course, Ariana might come to resent him for keeping the truth hidden from her.

The weight of the secret became palpable as they walked side by side, and he wrestled with the conflicting emotions within him. He couldn't bear the thought that the love he held for Ariana might inadvertently lead her down a path of regret in the future.

Suppressing the ache in his heart, Theodore gracefully maneuvered the car, drawing closer to Ariana.

"I really don't want to return to the hospital," Ariana expressed, a touch of frustration seeping through her words. "Being confined there all the time feels suffocating, and honestly, I think I'm better now, at least physically."

With genuine concern etched on his face, Theodore inquired, "Then where would you like to go instead?"

After pondering for a moment, a spark of joy illuminated Ariana's face, and she adorned a heartwarming smile. "I want to go home. I miss Judy's cooking."

Caught off guard, Theodore had not expected such a reply. He hesitated for a moment before asking cautiously, "Really? You're willing to go back?"

“Yes,” Ariana affirmed with a nod, displaying her unwavering determination.

With a playful glint in her eyes, Ariana couldn’t resist adding, “But let’s keep the apartment, just in case. Who knows, if you ever manage to infuriate me, I might run away and hide there.”

Theodore chuckled warmly, his voice filled with affection. “Alright, I own the entire floor of that apartment, so it’ll be ready for you whenever you want to stay there.”

Before long, Theodore and Ariana made their way back to the grand Andersons’ mansion.

As they stepped inside, Ariana was taken aback. The house was bathed in a warm glow, and she was pleasantly surprised to see that all the previously dismissed staff were back, as if they had never left. It felt like she was going back to the very first moment she had arrived here, only this time she was going back home with the person she loved.

Judy, the housekeeper, couldn’t contain her joy at seeing Theodore and Ariana coming back together. She hurriedly took the things from their hands, embracing Ariana in a heartfelt hug.

“You appear to have lost even more weight. Have you not been eating well?” Judy inquired without giving Ariana a chance to respond. “Are you hungry? Let me cook you some late-night snacks.”

A grateful smile adorned Ariana’s face as she nodded in response. After indulging in the delicious late-night snacks Judy had prepared, she engaged in a heartwarming conversation, catching up on everything that had transpired since her departure.

Following the delightful treat, Ariana retired to her old room.

However, upon opening the door, she was taken aback to find her belongings gone.

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Perplexed, she stood there until Theodore entered the room. Taking her by the hand, he guided her to his own room, saying, "This is where you'll stay from now on."

Ariana then noticed, to her surprise, that all her belongings had been neatly arranged in his room, even her cherished stuffed toys. Moreover Theodore had thoughtfully prepared everything she might need, from seasonal clothes to a personalized study desk. The meticulous attention to detail made it evident that he had been planning this for quite some time.

As the realization of her special place in his life dawned on her, warmth and joy overflowed in Ariana's heart. Emotions swirling within her like a tempest, Ariana found herself irresistibly drawn to Theodore. In a moment of spontaneity, she grasped his collar and planted a tender kiss upon his Lips, brimming with affection.

Though she initially intended to pull away from him after the sweet exchange of affection, Ariana found herself buried in Theodore's warm embrace. The kiss deepened, and she couldn't resist tightening her grip on his collar, surrendering to the intoxicating sensations that enveloped her. A soft, involuntary moan escaped her Lips as she felt Theodore's hands delicately caress her waist.

Yet, amidst the ardor of their embrace, Theodore's keen perception detected a shift in the atmosphere. Responding instinctively, he gently disengaged from the kiss, gazing into Ariana's flushed countenance, her skin warm to the touch. A trickle of blood escaped from her nose.

The sight of Ariana's face smeared with blood struck terror into Theodore's heart. Without wasting a moment, he delicately lifted her onto the bed and applied a healing potion he kept on hand for emergencies. Witnessing the potion seep into Ariana's system, his heart palpitated in dread.

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He had always kept this potion close at hand, bracing for the possibility of her sudden sickness. The fact that this hypothetical situation had now manifested was both a shock and a heartrending reality.

Ariana battled a persistent nosebleed and a torrent of emotions. An intense urge to lash out welled up within her, but she managed to suppress it, gripping Theodore's hand as a lifeline.

Soon, she was shaking uncontrollably, her words morphing into a disordered mix of references to their children and desperate pleas for help. Throughout this disorienting ordeal, one constant remained-her frequent calling out for Theodore.

“I'm here, I'm right here,” he murmured, cradling her close, his body echoing her tremors.

Even with Theodore's soothing presence, a profound sadness consumed Ariana. In her distress, she bit her Lip hard enough to draw blood and scratched her arms, leaving behind angry, red welts.

Alarmed, Theodore quickly caught her hand, placing a gentle kiss upon it to deter further self-inflicted harm.

Fortuitously, the healing potion worked its magic promptly, and Ariana finally found calm, cocooned in Theodore's steadfast reassurance, and drifted into a deep, restful sleep.

As he held her close, gently stroking her forehead and eyes, a cold sweat ran down his back. This harrowing episode served as a harsh wake-up call for him.

Theodore resolved firmly that their unborn children would not be allowed to continue their growth-even if it meant Ariana would resent him, he was prepared to bear the brunt of her anger.

Come morning, Ariana awoke refreshed. Her hand instinctively reached out, finding Theodore's side of the bed empty.

With a sleepy yawn, she touched her lips, the memory of last night's illness was fuzzy, but Theodore's tender kiss lingered clearly in her mind.

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Awave of worry washed over her as she laid a hand on her belly, contemplating the possible effects of her illness on the baby.

Shaking away these troubling thoughts, Ariana decided to look for Theodore. Despite an exhaustive search, he was nowhere to be found.

At that moment, Judy entered the room and noticed Ariana's perplexed expression. "Looking for Theodore?" she inquired with a knowing smile.

Ariana nodded in confirmation.

"He stepped out, but he should be back soon. Why not take a moment to rest? I'll prepare a breakfast for you."

Used to Theodore's early departures, Ariana didn't question it further.

After a hearty breakfast, she felt rejuvenated and decided to spend some time tending to the garden flowers before catching up on the latest news online.

The furor over the plagiarism accusations against *The Missing Body* had significantly cooled down, and the tide of public opinion was slowly turning favorable. Heartened by this news, Ariana proceeded to peruse other articles.

However, as the hours rolled by, she began to feel a hint of restlessness creeping in and decided to retreat to her room to play with her beloved collection of dolls and action figures. Ariana relocated a few dolls, including the sizable one she had brought back the previous night, to her study.

While meticulously adjusting their placements, she accidentally triggered a hidden switch. Much to her surprise, a door that had been cleverly camouflaged within the room's design noiselessly swung open.

Ariana was astonished. She hadn't anticipated to find a hidden room within the grandeur of the Anderson family mansion, despite having resided there for quite some time.

Asurge of trepidation and intrigue overtook her as she ventured a peek inside. The doorway opened to a room adorned with two portraits on the opposite wall, one of Aimee and the other of Marley.

Accrucifix was centrally placed, flanked by an array of ornate boxes, each embellished with a variety of gemstones. In the corners, stacks of art paper caught her attention.

Ariana approached the boxes and sketches, attempting to decipher their significance.

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The sketches portrayed different phases of Aimee and Marley's Lives, each dated and arranged chronologically.

It commenced with Aimee solo, but as time flowed, infant Marley emerged, nestled in Aimee's embrace.

Yet, Aimee's expression remained eerily vacant, reminiscent of a ghostly specter.

Proceeding along the timeline, the drawings depicted Aimee confined within the flower house, her back to the window. The meticulous strokes and artistic finesse suggested to Ariana that these images were Likely Theodore's creation. As she surveyed the room, a blue teddy bear atop a nearby box entered her peripheral vision.

Intrigued, she delicately picked it up, questioning the presence of such a toy in this place. Suddenly, Theodore's voice echoed from the doorway.

Startled, Ariana swiftly set the teddy bear back down, blurting out an explanation in her startled state. "I didn't mean to snoop. | inadvertently triggered a switch..."

Unexpectedly, Theodore remained composed. He entered and revealed, "This is my sanctuary to remember them." His fingers lightly traced the sketched figures. "Whenever | felt troubled, | would retreat here for solace."

Relieved he wasn't upset, Ariana inquired, "What do these boxes hold?"

Theodore traced the boxes with his fingers, replying, "Their belongings, things | secretly saved."

"Secretly?" Ariana echoed, puzzled.

"Yes," Theodore affirmed. "My mother's name has always been a forbidden subject for Darian. Mentioning her in this mansion or anywhere else was prohibited. When she died, there wasn't even a decent burial. All her possessions were incinerated by Darian. These boxes contain the few items | managed to save over the years."

He glanced at the teddy bear Ariana had previously touched, adding, "And this teddy bear was Marley's cherished toy. | only recently discovered it."

As Theodore narrated, Ariana felt a profound sadness. Her heart ached for his loss.

Theodore then directed Ariana to a ruby-adorned box. He lifted the lid to reveal an assortment of books and velvet boxes. Extracting one of these boxes, Theodore unveiled a stunning gemstone necklace within.

Its design was intricate, boasting a subtle yet Luxurious elegance.

Carefully, Theodore clasped the necklace around Ariana's neck, revealing, "This was intended for my mother's future daughter-in-law, a gift from her. Today, | can finally present it to you."

Ariana touched the necklace, her emotions too profound to put into words.

Theodore offered a comforting smile, saying, "My mother always fantasized about the kind of wife | would bring home. Unfortunately, she isn't here to meet you, but if she were, she would have been enamored with you."

In Theodore's recollections, Aimee was always a patient and kind-hearted woman, particularly fond of the young. Had she been alive, she would have doted on Ariana.

Moved by his words, Ariana glanced at the wall paintings.

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Alingering question tugged at her, and she asked, "And how did Marley pass away?"

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Theodore's countenance changed, his emotions swirling Like a tempest within. After a prolonged struggle, he finally said, "She took her own life!

After the words escaped her lips, Ariana instantly regretted her question. Every mention of Marley seemed to stir deep wounds in Theodore's heart, Leaving him visibly troubled.

Nonetheless, relieved that he appeared composed, Ariana couldn't resist her surprise and curiosity. "But why would she make such a decision?"

Theodore hesitated, the past haunting him like a ghost that refused to be silenced. "After my mother's departure, Marley and Darian were both scarred, emotionally wounded to their cores."

Perplexed, Ariana probed further, "But why would Darian be affected too?"

With a heavy sigh, Theodore delved into the painful memories. "In those days, Darian drove my mother to madness, confining her within the mansion's walls with no compassion. Her mental state deteriorated, and in her vulnerability, she suffered the unthinkable, violated by a servant, which led to the birth of my half-sister, Marley."

The anguish in Theodore's eyes was evident as he continued to recount the sorrowful tale. Ariana gently reached out and consoled him, saying, "We don't have to talk about this if it's too distressing." She felt empathetic and guilty for unearthing these painful memories.

But Theodore shook his head and pulled Ariana closer, seeking solace in her embrace. "It's alright. These burdens have been buried deep within me for years. Having you here to share them with me provides a measure of relief."

Ariana reciprocated the hug, lending her support in silence.

Theodore resumed his narration, "Darian viewed Marley as an embarrassment, a child born out of wedlock. Consequently, when she came into this world, he abandoned her in a far-flung town, handing her over to an elderly couple who yearned for a child. He even stripped her of the Anderson surname, and she became Marley Deleon, taking her foster parents' name."

Ariana's mind started connecting the dots, all the pieces falling into place like an intricate puzzle.

Thoughts of the small stone house and Lilyana's words came together, making perfect sense. She couldn't help but comment, "Marley must have found some happiness in that little stone house."

Though devoid of luxury, she had parents who cherished and cared for her, providing the love and attention any carefree child would desire.

To a young soul, having loving parents was the epitome of happiness.

Theodore nodded in agreement, acknowledging that those moments in the small stone house might have been the most joyful ones in Marley's life.

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"But how did she end up back with the Anderson family?" Ariana inquired, her curiosity still piqued.

With a tender touch, Theodore caressed her neck, explaining, "When her foster parents unexpectedly passed away, Marley had to return to the southern estate. However, by then, my mother's health had deteriorated to the point where she couldn't recognize Marley for a long time."

“Marley Lived a life of isolation and loneliness,” Theodore continued, his voice trembling with emotion. “So, I used to sneak over to visit them, but one day, Darian caught wind of it. He followed me to the southern estate. That was the first time he laid eyes on the grown-up Marley.”

Ariana’s heart skipped a beat. Somehow she had a premonition.

Theodore said, his voice cracking. “Her beauty, resembling my mother’s, bewitched that vile creature, and he conceived sinister intentions!”

“What?! That scum! How could he do such a thing? How?!” In the realm of heartache and wrath, Ariana’s emotions surged like a tempest at sea, her heart aflame with anger and indignation. But beneath it all, worry gripped her soul like a vice. The thought of Marley’s suicide filled her with dread, her heart sinking into a dark abyss. Anxiously, she asked, “Did that scoundrel harm Marley?”

Theodore shook his head solemnly. “At first glance, Darian feigned affection for Marley, cunningly coaxing her into the mansion’s confines. In her innocence and naivety, Marley believed she had finally found paternal warmth, and so she agreed.”

This disclosure further heightened Ariana’s unease, compelling her to listen as Theodore unraveled the haunting tale.

Chapter: 855 “Darian orchestrated Marley’s stay on the fourth floor, ever finding excuses to get near to her,” Theodore continued slowly.

Young Marley, shrouded in naivety, perceived Darian’s attentions as genuine fatherly Love, a blossoming illusion nurtured by his cunning manipulation.

Yet, in the shadows, Theodore discerned the vile intentions concealed behind Darian’s Lingering glances on Marley’s skirts and his unsettling touches on her back. Each repulsive gesture stirred deep disgust in him.

He bore witness to the sinister thoughts that plagued Darian’s mind, and thus, he remained vigilant, cleverly and determinedly thwarting Darian’s every attempt to exploit Marley’s innocence.

"I sought to part them, to protect Marley from Darian's sinister advances. But, alas, she couldn't fathom my motives. In her eyes, I was the obstruction, depriving her of the fatherly Love she sought,"

Theodore uttered with a heavy heart, the turmoil within him evident.

"I couldn't tell Marley the truth face to face. I couldn't tell her that her father had such filthy thoughts!" Theodore's throat constricted, and he fumbled for words to describe his distress.

He was willing to put up with Marley's confusion and animosity if it meant keeping her safe from the harsh reality. Ariana probed gently, "So, Marley's animosity toward you stemmed from this misunderstanding?" A pang of sorrow accompanied her thoughts, recalling Theodore's earlier sentiments of unworthiness to be Marley's brother.

Why would he think that? He was just a child back then. She could not accept such self-deprecation from him, for he had proven himself a protector beyond measure.

Theodore, however, shook his head. "Marley was a kind soul. Though she misunderstood, she never bore me any hatred. Instead, she withdrew in silence. She often visited our mother in the southern suburbs since she knew she was lonely there. Over time, her bond with our mother grew stronger. This was originally a good thing."

Theodore's voice wavered, his grip tightening around Ariana. "But then, I did something that made Marley truly despise me." Theodore's voice shook as he recalled Marley's piercing screams. In her enraged state, she accused him of being a murderer.

"It's all right, Theodore. All of it is now in the past. What you did wasn't wrong." His admission tugged at Ariana's heart, and she held him with tender care, her lips planting gentle kisses upon his face.

"That year, when I paid a visit to our mother, I found her attempting to hang herself," Theodore's voice trembled with suppressed emotions.

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“As I rushed to save her, she tearfully begged me to let her die. Tormented by a life devoid of true joy or release, she just wanted to seek freedom from her pain!” Tears welled up in Theodore’s eyes, and his voice cracked with emotion, “And in that fateful moment, I hesitated! I just stood

there, paralyzed, watching her suffer and suffocate before my very eyes! At that very moment, Marley, who came to see our mom, saw the whole thing. That's when her hatred of me really began.”

Ariana’s heart wrenched after hearing this, and she hugged Theodore tightly. As he sobbed against her neck, she could feel the warmth of his tears. He cried, “Marley was right. I am a murderer! How could I ever watch my mother die without stopping her?”

“It's not your burden to bear, Theodore. You mustn’t let it weigh on your heart.” Ariana embraced Theodore tightly, her compassion a soothing balm to his restless soul. “This is Darian’s wicked doing, not yours. You went above and beyond, fighting with every fiber of your being.”

Her gentle hand caressed his back, a soothing melody amidst the chaos.

“Marley was just a tender bud back then, unable to grasp the intricacies of life’s trials. But mark my words, she’s a wise and sensible soul, and one day, she will comprehend and absolve you. This burden is not of your making.”

Ariana held him close until his tears subsided. With eyes tinged red, Theodore spoke, his voice devoid of emotion. “Soon after that dreadful incident, Marley decided to kill herself by jumping off the building.”

Ariana was stunned. She now understood the burden Theodore had been bearing for so long as a result of this series of events.

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At that moment, words seemed to elude Ariana, unable to mend the fractures in Theodore’s heart. She looked at him with a feeling of profound sorrow, gripping his hand firmly.

“Yet... I have my doubts that Marley’s death was her own doing.”

Theodore whispered, his voice a murmur of uncertainty, "ALL signs pointed to suicide, but Marley had an insurmountable fear of heights.

How could she choose to jump off a building as a way to depart from this world?"

With eyes closed, Theodore retreated into his thoughts, a lone soldier on a relentless quest for truth and vengeance. While revenge was done, the elusive truth behind Marley's demise still eluded him.

In spite of all the evidence pointing to the fact that Marley had committed suicide, Theodore clung to his suspicions. Ariana, too, found herself pondering. "Were there no witnesses to the tragedy?"

Theodore shook his head solemnly. "No one except Helen, who was present when Marley fell. That's why I've kept her close all these years. If Marley truly took her own life, I want to hear her final words."

The mention of Helen stirred a sense of suspicion in Ariana, as she herself had been deceived by that woman before. She asked directly, "Can Helen be trusted?"

Theodore denied, "I had my reservations, but she had an alibi at the time of the incident, and surveillance footage showed her in the backyard when Marley jumped."

Ariana thought back to the blue teddy bear and questioned with a hint of seriousness in her voice, "Are you sure that teddy bear was left behind by Marley?"

"Yes," Theodore replied with unwavering certainty, "It was a cherished gift from her foster parents, accompanying her since childhood. She held it dear."

He hesitated, adding, "But while we were going through Marley's stuff, we didn't find it. Ariana's eyes gleamed with suspicion as she probed further, "Then where did you get it?" Theodore's nerves tensed, and he gripped Ariana's hand. "Helen gave it to me!"

This revelation only deepened Ariana's suspicions, and she spoke candidly. "Although the blue teddy bear was deliberately made to look old, its production code caught my eye."

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Ariana was aware of this since she often looked at the manufacturing codes on stuffed toys. She took out her phone and wrote down the code.

She now gave her phone to Theodore, explaining, "Look, the manufacturing batch of this teddy bear is from six years ago, which means it was made after Marley's death. It's impossible for her to be the one who left it behind." In the wake of Ariana's words, Theodore's suspicion took root, and his brow knitted like a puzzle waiting to be solved. "Why

would Helen give me a fake one? Could she have hidden the real teddy bear?" he wondered aloud.

"You could say that," Ariana mused, her thoughts tangled, "Though the true reasons elude me, there's an undercurrent of hidden motives behind her actions."

Ariana believed that Theodore should look into Helen more, maybe beginning with the blue teddy bear, since something else was obviously being hidden.

Ariana's intuition resonated with Theodore, forming a silent alliance between their minds. Theodore's gaze fixed on the blue teddy bear, lost in a labyrinth of thoughts.

Meanwhile, in the murky depths of Mercy Hospital's third-floor basement. Helen sat still, the room lit badly and filled with drifting dust particles.

Her countenance resembled a lifeless statue, devoid of emotion.

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When a noise stirred at the door, a glimmer of hope flickered in

Helen's eyes.

But as a nurse entered instead of Theodore, the glimmer faded Like a distant star swallowed by the night. Her expression reverted to its emotionless facade as she sat still on the bed.

The nurse pushed a cart and barely lifted her face, saying, "It's time for your medication."

Helen remained motionless, untouched by the nurse's words.

Growing impatient, the nurse took hold of her, pressing the medicine into her hand and delivering a stern warning, "Take it now, and no more vomiting!"

Helen's eyes locked onto the nurse with a sinister glint. She spoke softly. "What's your name?" Ignoring Helen's question, the nurse continued tending to the IV drip, turning a deaf ear to the question.

A cunning smile crept onto Helen's lips as she scrutinized the nurse from head to toe, her mind calculating Like a chess grandmaster.

There was a striking resemblance between the nurse's build and height and her own. Helen remained silent, observing the nurse with a keen eye. As the nurse leaned in, Helen seized the opportunity with lightning speed, her grip like a vise, strangling the nurse's neck.

Surprised and panic-stricken, the nurse struggled to reach for the call bell, but Helen's strength prevailed, rendering her unconscious with a single, swift strike.

The nurse crumpled to the floor, and Helen released her hold, her own chest heaving with the exertion. She felt as if her heart would explode any second from then!

After a moment, she removed the needle from her hand. Then she stood up and donned the nurse's uniform.

The name badge on the uniform bore the nurse's identity. Helen sneered, the name seemingly inconsequential compared to her grand scheme.

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Steeling herself, Helen tucked the nurse's body under the bed and covered it with a blanket.

Helen finished everything but was still having trouble breathing and her chest was heaving. Several times, she came dangerously close to passing out.

A poor heart did make things more difficult.

Helen sat on the floor for a moment, letting the anger clear up. She readjusted her clothes, lowered her hat, and slipped on her mask. Then, resolute and disguised, she pushed the medicine cart out the door.

In the dimly lit corridor, guards stood like sentinels. They spaced about twelve feet apart, their watchful eyes scanning the area. Helen gripped her mask tightly, trying to blend into the environment as she stealthily headed outside.

As she passed past the guards, their scrutinizing eyes bore into her, causing a thin sheen of sweat to form on her palms as she pushed the cart.

One of the guards felt a flicker of suspicion and called out, "Stop! How are things inside?"

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Helen's footsteps faltered, and she replied nervously, her voice hushed, "She's asleep."

The guard who asked the question exchanged a knowing look with his comrade and quickly headed toward the room. Seeing an opening, Helen hastened her pace, pushing the cart to the elevator.

Just as she reached the elevator, the guard who had entered the room suddenly burst out, shouting, "Stop her!"

Helen's breath caught in her throat, and in panic, she released the cart and darted into the elevator. Her heart pounded wildly as she frantically pounded on the elevator buttons, unaware of the floor she was on. As the elevator doors slid open, she bolted out, fleeing in utter disarray.

But underestimating the guards, especially with Theodore's people stationed throughout the entire building, proved a grave mistake.

As Helen emerged, several black-clad figures scoured the area in pursuit.

Anxiety overwhelmed her, her limbs trembling as she tried to evade them. In her haste, she stumbled on a door and found herself in an empty office.

The office sprawled out spaciouly, with no one inside. Helen quietly shut the door but dared not lock it, fearing suspicion from the guards if they noticed a locked room. Taking in her surroundings, she crouched low and found refuge in a tiny cupboard, curling herself into a ball to fit inside.

Soon, sounds came from outside the door. The guards seemed to hold this room in high regard, hesitating for a moment before knocking. Receiving no response, they pushed the door open.

Helen's heart was pounding in her chest. But she remained silent and motionless within the cupboard. She heard the guards' footsteps as they combed through the room. Finding nothing, they eventually departed.

Once the sound of the closing door assured her of their absence, Helen cautiously emerged from the cupboard.

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Collapsing into the chair before the office desk, she struggled to steady her breath. Her countenance turned grim, her discomfort evident.

At this moment, she regretted feigning a heart condition in the first place. Had she not done so, Theodore would never have discovered her lie, nor would he have replaced her heart with a defective one.

The thought of Theodore brought tears to her eyes, and she whispered, "Theodore, you're ruthless, going to such lengths for that woman!

With her emotions in turmoil, Helen clutched her clothes tightly, almost tearing her skirt!

After mustering the strength to regain composure, she rose to leave.

But then, her gaze idly fell on the medical records strewn across the table.

On it was a name that ignited a deep-seated hatred within her; Ariana!

Her footsteps stalled, and she seized the medical records to read them.

As she read the contents, surprise and intrigue danced across her face, eventually morphing into an uncontainable grin.

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She delved further, her smile growing more pronounced, especially when she stumbled upon Theodore's signature on the consent form for pregnancy termination!

The file contained three documents. One report was about the prenatal examination, revealing the presence of twins who were in the pink of health.

The second report recounted Ariana's physical examination, painting a grim picture of her condition. It seemed she was grappling with the repercussions of past medications, and her health had taken a toll, marked as high-risk.

The attending physician raised a red flag, warning of imminent danger if the pregnancy continued. The dire prognosis painted a chilling scenario, with a mortality rate already reaching a staggering 60 percent on the day of delivery.

To address the situation, in the third report, Theodore had already signed the consent form for the termination of the pregnancy. Helen, holding the report, couldn't contain her sinister glee. Her trembling hands spoke volumes!

"Ah, retribution has found its way!" she cackled, her eyes darting to the nearby copy machine.

There was nothing but Lunacy in her eyes!

Ariana must have been unaware that Theodore intended her to undergo an abortion, given how much she wanted a child. Otherwise, she and Theodore would have disagreed.

Helen had an idea while observing the copy machine.

In the Andersons' residence, Theodore returned before noon, and after a simple lunch, he began packing up. "Let's visit the hospital again today."

He expressed his intention to take Ariana back to the hospital, driven by the harrowing experience of her recent illness. Concerns grew as their backup medication had been depleted, leaving him uneasy about her safety in the house.

Ariana was well aware of her health scare the day before and didn't oppose Theodore's plan outright.

She couldn't help but place her hand on her lower abdomen and inquired with a tinge of worry, "What did the doctor say regarding my health?"

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That I'd be fine after the surgery, right? That there won't be any complications?"

Theodore paused, rising from his seat to embrace Ariana tenderly. He tried to reassure her, "It's just a minor surgery, my dear. Nothing to fear. They'll simply remove the remaining medication."

Her next question probed deeper. "Is everything set for the surgery?"

"Indeed, it's scheduled a week from now. After that, we'll handle the medication injections carefully. I'll be right beside you," he murmured, his hand caressing her hair in a comforting gesture.

"Will our babies be okay? Won't the surgery hurt them?" She couldn't help but voice her concern for their unborn children. Caught off guard, Theodore averted his gaze. "Fear not. Our babies will be fine."

Ariana had the impression that Theodore was harboring some guilt. She took his face in her hands, lifted his face, and said, "Really?"

Theodore was afraid Ariana would suspect him, so he didn't waste any time. Thus, he Looked into her eyes and said, "It's true." At long Last, Ariana felt some relief.

She murmured while in Theodore's arms, "But I do not wish to return to the hospital so soon. I'm good to go now. Let's rest at home for a little Longer before returning to the hospital, all right?"

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Theodore felt compelled to grant her request after taking a Look at the person in his arms. However, he hesitated. He rubbed her head tenderly and sighed quietly to show his worry. "But the hospital is a safer place. You'll have immediate access to medical care if you have another episode."

"I'll get PTSD if I'm kept in the hospital all the time! Do you not have any pity for me? Staying in the hospital is unsettling for me. Alright, how about we just stay at home?" Like a pampered brat, Ariana stared pitifully at him.

When he heard her gentle tone, Theodore conceded, saying, "Okay, you can stay a few more days, but you have to go to the hospital as soon as you feel uncomfortable."

"Okay!" Ariana cheerfully agreed, kissed Theodore on the cheek, and bolted.

At the same time, Horace called and Theodore answered. As soon as the phone was connected, the other party said, "Boss, Helen has escaped!"

The news didn't faze Theodore; he calmly returned the things he had packed.

Ever since discovering Helen's collusion with Jasper, he realized she was a real wild card, more unpredictable than he had imagined.

With unwavering confidence, he gave Horace a few instructions, urging him to intensify the search.

After dinner, Ariana relaxed in the garden, savoring the gentle breeze and the delicate fragrance of flowers, feeling completely at peace.

Her phone buzzed incessantly with messages from a lively group chat discussing Sarah and Tyler's upcoming birthdays. Both coincidentally fell on the same day; tomorrow. Betsy and Marge were in high spirits, exchanging jokes and weaving whimsical plans for the celebration.

They even flirted with the idea of an island getaway with a dazzling pool party, graced by a gathering of dashing gentlemen and beautiful ladies.

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Sarah boasted shamelessly, proclaiming she would spare no expense for their extravagant endeavors. Ariana playfully teased her, suggesting that a pool party could annoy her boyfriend to no end. Marge and Betsy found it amusing, further fueling Sarah's bravado.

Amidst the laughter, Ariana's attention shifted to her phone's date display, reminding her of an upcoming event.

She exited the group chat and opened her calendar and confirmed the approaching birthday of Theodore, only a week away. Lost in contemplation, she racked her brain for a unique and extraordinary gift for him.

Watches and conventional presents seemed inadequate for someone as exceptional as Theodore.

She yearned to surprise him with something truly special, something that would resonate with his distinct tastes.

Ariana was thinking so deeply about Theodore that she began to miss him.

Longing to see him, to feel his warm embrace and soft kisses, she set off to find Theodore in his study.

But when she got there, he wasn't there. The lights were on, and his desk was a mess, with papers all over and some even on the floor.