The Ruined Bride of Velvet Nights by Brick Moving Ant

Chapter 10

- Chapter 16
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- I resumed my work as a doctor.
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- Three years later, the situation in the Democratic Republic of Congo was even worse than before.
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- The areas controlled by armed groups had expanded to an unprecedented scale.
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- There was a food crisis, cholera outbreaks, sexual violence, and an endless stream of kidnappings.
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- It felt as though this place had become a "land abandoned by God."
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- Every day, witnessing the hellish reality around me, I couldn't help but wonder whether, for Doctors Without Borders, their treatment was extending hope or merely prolonging suffering.
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- A few months later, Adam told me he had found five of the children from that group.
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- Among them were Ray and Mary.
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- They had successfully escaped that day.
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- They later got in touch with their relatives and were now living with family members in Kwangani.
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- This news was a breath of fresh air.
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- I rushed to meet them.
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- The moment the car arrived at the meeting point, Mary rushed out.
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- She threw herself into my arms, eyes brimming with tears.
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- "Zoey?! You finally came!"
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- She had grown much taller and had blossomed into a young woman.
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- Looking anxiously into the car, she asked,
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- "Where's Doctor Joseph? Why didn't he come with you?"
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- I hesitated, then said, "He's too busy."
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- Mary immediately tightened her fingers. "...Has something happened to him?"
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- Children who have experienced death are especially sensitive to vague answers.
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- I shook my head reassuringly.
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- "No, he's fine. I'll show you."
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- I flipped through my phone, but found I didn't have any pictures of Joseph.
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- Because I couldn't bear to look at them, I had stored them all away in my computer when I returned
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- home.
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- I scrolled to the very end and found a picture of Jackson.
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- He was wearing a white coat, reading medical records under the warm glow of a desk lamp.
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- He looked strikingly similar to Joseph.
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- Mary saw the picture, and her face lit up.
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- She jumped for joy, then pulled her brother over, saying,
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- "I want to be a doctor too!"
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- The other children chimed in,
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- "I want to too!"
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- "I want to heal people!"
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- I gently patted their heads and asked the boy who had remained silent.
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- "What about Ray? What do you want to do in the future?"
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- Ray glanced at the camera hanging on my chest, a little embarrassed.
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- "...I want to be a journalist."
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- Chapter 16
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- I was taken aback.
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- "I want the world to see the people who are suffering."
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- "If they can be seen, maybe someone will reach out to help..."
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- I fought back tears as I gathered them all into my arms.
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- If Joseph were still here, he would be so happy, wouldn't he?
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- Before leaving, I gave my compact camera to Ray and left Joseph's stethoscope and books with Mary
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- and the other children.
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- Their cheeks flushed with excitement.
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- These children, living in the depths of hardship, still hoped to lift up a bright future despite their
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- scars.
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- Just like Joseph once said,
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- "Where there is hope, there is a future."
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- Months passed.
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- My search for Joseph's body yielded no results.
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- I visited the forest countless times.
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- But since it was night, I had no idea which direction I was running in.
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- Eventually, I had no choice but to give up.

I started going through old photos, documenting Joseph's story piece by piece on my Instagram.

Many details had become blurry after three years.

At first, I did it out of fear that with time, I might forget more.

But to my surprise, the posts went viral.

There were an overwhelming number of comments wanting to know more about his story.

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The Ruined Bride of Velvet Nights.

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Chapter 16

Some of his former patients even recognized him.

"Doctor Joseph was really great. When my mom was sick and becoming a bit confused, he never once lost his patience with her."

"He even performed magic tricks for my daughter. The director thought he was playing cards and scolded him!"

Soon after, I received a video call from Jackson.

He sent me screenshots of my Instagram and asked,

"Is this you?"

I admitted freely.

"Yes."

He was stunned, his expression filled with bitterness.

"So the person you were talking about was my brother..."

"Yes."

"I should have figured it out... I should have known!!

"No wonder you always looked at me like that! I thought you really loved me!!"

He lowered his head in defeat.

"Is he... okay?"

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