

No Second Baby, No You, Only Divorce

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Scarlett Theron pulled into Oakland Villa around ten that night. It was the fifteenth—her ovulation day, a date she'd marked on her calendar weeks ago.

Scarlett already had a daughter, but her husband's parents, Amanda and Richard Stewart, had been gently urging her to have a second child ever since.

In most other families, she might have playfully joked about their eagerness—half-teasing whether they had some special legacy to look forward to. But the Stewarts? As Rivergate's wealthiest family, with a multi-billion-dollar fortune, everyone knew they hoped to welcome another male heir into the family, someone who could eventually be part of carrying on their family's legacy.

When she walked into the bedroom, her husband Vincent Stewart was already in bed, waiting.

He didn't say a word—no “hello”, no “how was your day”—just moved into action like they were checking off a chore.

Three minutes later, Vincent rolled out of bed and headed for the bathroom to clean up, leaving Scarlett lying there, still in her clothes, feeling more like a tool than a wife.

Vincent emerged a few minutes later, pulling on his shirt with his back to her. “Keep tracking your cycle,” he said flatly. “Call me if the test comes back positive.”

That was how it had been for all five years of their marriage-him, quiet as a stone, cold as winter.

Their marriage was just a show-something to tell the press and the Stewart elders that everything was “normal”.

Scarlett knew about Vincent’s other woman, of course. She’d scrolled through every one of his social media accounts, dug through old comments, and finally tracked down the profile of the woman who had Vincent’s attention.

Ever since, she’d been secretly following her posts-because that was the only way she could find out where Vincent was, what he was doing, who he was with.

The woman posted constantly-photos of her meals, vacation snaps, birthday parties.

Before they’d started trying for a second baby, Scarlett barely saw Vincent at all. Now, he showed up once a month-just enough to “try” for another baby,

Knowing he was in a hurry to leave, Scarlett scrambled out of bed. “Can we talk for a minute?” she called after him.

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Vincent turned, his face blank, like he couldn’t figure out why she’d want to “talk”. “About what?”

Scarlett’s voice dropped, almost a plea. “I want us to be a real couple. You know? Like... have dinner together. Talk. Not just... this.”

She gestured vaguely at the bed, at the empty space between them.

She knew deep down their marriage was falling apart, but she couldn’t help clinging to the smallest hope. What if this time, he listened? What if he realized she wasn’t just a womb, but the woman who’d loved him for eight years, who’d married him even when her family warned her against it, who’d had his daughter and wanted nothing more than to make their family work? She didn’t want her marriage to end in failure.

But Scarlett's words vanished into the air. Maybe Vincent didn't hear her. Maybe he just didn't care. He finished buttoning his shirt, clipped on his watch, and headed for the door.

Scarlett hurried after him, but she didn't beg like she used to-didn't grab his arm and beg him to stay a little longer. This time, when he reached the doorway, she stood her ground.

"Vincent," she snapped, her voice breaking, "you come here once a month. You never call me first. We haven't eaten a meal together in... I don't even remember how long. We're strangers who share a house. Is this really a marriage?"

Vincent paused, finally turning to look at her. He didn't acknowledge her tears, didn't seem to notice the way her hands were shaking. "Once you're pregnant with another baby," he said, "I'll move back to Oakland Villa." Then he walked out, the door clicking shut behind him like he hadn't even heard her.

Scarlett stood there, frozen.

Eight years of loving him, five years of marriage-and she'd given everything. When she had their daughter, Vanessa Stewart, she'd suffered an amniotic embolism. The doctors had told the family three times she might not make it. Even then, she'd been willing to risk her life again for a second child-for a son, just to make him happy.

But now, a cold doubt settled in her chest. Was it worth it? All this pain, all this waiting... for a man who didn't even look at her when she cried?

After her shower, she picked up her phone on autopilot and opened her favorite video app. Her “frequently watched” list had only one name-Rina.

She tapped on the profile-and there it was, a new video posted two minutes ago. It was just a photo of two shadows under a streetlamp, but in the corner, two hands were tangled together, both wearing matching couple bracelets.

The caption read, “Two shadows under the light-one’s mine, and the other’s mine too.”

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Scarlett’s chest ached, but it was a dull pain now, not the sharp, crushing agony she’d felt the first time she saw a post like this. Maybe she was getting used to it.

Every time Vincent left her, he was rushing to be with someone else. But she told herself as long as he still needed her to have that heir, no one could take her place as Mrs. Stewart.

She just had to keep swallowing the hurt, keep playing the part.

A month later.

At seven o'clock that evening, Scarlett clutched a fresh positive pregnancy test, her hands shaking with excitement as she hurried back to Oakland Villa. She'd been waiting for this—hoping this would be the thing that brought Vincent home, that made him see her.

But as she reached the living room doorway, she heard Amanda talking—and froze.

“Vincent, you're thirty-two,” Amanda said, her voice sharp. “Five years of marriage, and you've only got a daughter to show for it. You two ‘try’ once a month? How's Scarlett supposed to get pregnant that way? If she can't do it, just have that woman you're seeing have the baby. As long as it's a boy—as long as he's a Stewart—I'll accept him.”

Vincent's voice cut in, firm, “That's not the same, Mom.”

Amanda huffed. “Why not? A grandson's a grandson!”

Scarlett held her breath, stepping back into the hallway. For a second, she thought he was defending her—defending their marriage. After all, she was his wife. No matter what he did outside, she was the one who'd carried his child, who'd almost died for his family.

Then Vincent spoke again, and her blood turned to ice.

“Mom, do you remember when Scarlett had Vanessa?” he said, calm like he was talking about the weather. “She had an amniotic embolism. Having a baby’s risky.”

Amanda scoffed, “Don’t give me that! She’s a jinx. Other women have five kids without breaking a sweat, but Scarlett? Her first birth had us all over the news for three days-bad luck, that’s what she is!”

Vincent didn’t argue with the “jinx” comment. He just said, “Scarlett’s already been through it once. She can handle the risk. But Sabrina’s still young-I can’t ask her to go through that.”

Sabrina. The name hit Scarlett like a punch to the gut. She stood there, the pregnancy test crumpled in her hand, tears burning her eyes but not falling.

She’d known Vincent didn’t love her. She’d known he was cheating. She’d even known their

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marriage was a lie. But she'd clung to one stupid hope-that having another baby would tie him to her, that she'd always be Mrs. Stewart no matter how much Vincent played around outside.

But the truth was worse than she'd ever imagined. To Vincent, she wasn't a wife. She wasn't even a person. She was just a vessel-one that had already proven it could survive the danger of childbirth, so he didn't mind risking her again. Sabrina, though? She was the one he cared about. Sabrina was the one he wouldn't let get hurt.

Scarlett tuned out their conversation, thrown back to Vanessa's birth-waking up weak and raw-throated in the ICU. She thought about the nights she'd spent alone, crying because he didn't call. She thought about the way she'd tracked the mistress' posts, just to feel like she still knew him.

Scarlett'd risked her life for the Stewarts, and they didn't even care if she lived or died.

Clutching the pregnancy test, she realized-it was time to stop.

Today was supposed to be their monthly "try" day, but none of that mattered now. Her heart— what was left of it-had broken in that instant.

There was no point in keeping this baby. If no one else cared about her, she had to care about herself.

Just as she turned to leave, the housekeeper, Freya Miller, rounded the corner. “Mrs. Stewart? You’re back already?”

Scarlett forced a small smile. Maybe today was the day she finally said it out loud. The day she asked for a divorce.

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