

No Second Baby, No You, Only Divorce

Chapter 14

Vincent headed for the door, and Marcus jumped up to see him off. Scarlett stayed in her seat, picking at her food-she wasn't hungry anymore, but she didn't want to be the first to leave.

When dinner finally ended, everyone went their separate ways. Scarlett and Marvin walked back to the school together; their rooms were both in the teacher's dorm on campus. The small town was quiet at night, the moon hanging low in the sky, casting long shadows on the sidewalk. It was October, and the osmanthus trees lining the street were in bloom, filling the air with a sweet, cloying scent.

Scarlett wasn't much of a talker, so the walk was quiet. Marvin finally broke the silence, shoving his hands in his pockets. "Ms. Theron, where did you go to college?"

"Rivergate Medical College," she said.

“Really? I have a friend who graduated from there. Small world,” he said, smiling.

Scarlett nodded. “Yeah, it is.”

“Marcus said you’re heading back to the city tomorrow?” he asked.

She sighed. “Yeah, my volunteer stint here is up. I need to get back to my practice.”

Marvin hesitated, then said, “Do you think... maybe I could take you out to dinner sometime? When I’m in Rivergate?”

Scarlett paused. She liked Marvin—he was kind, genuine, nothing like Vincent. She smiled. “If you’re in the city, I’ll treat you. Just let me know when you’re coming.”

Marvin's face lit up, like a kid who'd just gotten a present. "Are you sure? I feel like I should pay -I asked you out, after all."

Scarlett laughed. "It's fine. My treat."

By then, they'd reached the school gate. What they didn't know was that Vincent and Marcus were standing in the shadows by the track, watching them.

Marcus nudged Vincent. "Don't you think they make a cute couple? Dr. Theron's a great girl- kind, smart, good with the kids. Marvin's a good guy too. They'd be perfect together.

Vincent stared at Scarlett and Marvin, his face unreadable. He thought back to the early years of their marriage-how Scarlett had clung to him, begging him to spend time with her, to look at her. He'd ignored her, thinking her too clingy, too desperate. Then Vanessa was born, and Scarlett had stopped caring about herself-her hair was always a mess, her clothes stained with spit-up, her eyes tired. He hadn't touched her in years.

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But she was still his wife. Even if he didn't want her, he didn't like seeing her with someone else.

He didn't say anything. Marcus took his silence for disinterest and kept talking. "Whoever marries Dr. Theron is a lucky man. She's the kind of woman who makes a house a home."

Lucky? Vincent thought. He'd never felt lucky. He'd felt trapped, annoyed, indifferent. But as he watched Scarlett laugh at something Marvin said, he felt a flicker of something he couldn't

name.

Scarlett and Marvin turned the corner toward the dorm, disappearing from sight. Marcus turned to Vincent. "You and Abbott both drank-you can't drive back to the city tonight. Why don't you stay at my place? It's small, but it's clean."

There were no hotels in town-just a seedy motel on the edge of town, and Vincent would sooner sleep in his car than there. He stared at the dorm building, lost in thought.

Scarlett had just closed her dorm room door when she heard a knock. She opened it, expecting Marvin-maybe he'd forgotten something-but it was Marcus, with Vincent right behind him.

Marcus' room was right next to hers. He fumbled with his keys, then heard Vincent say, "No need, Marcus. I have somewhere else to stay."

Before Marcus could ask where, Vincent walked over to Scarlett's door and knocked again.

Scarlett frowned when she saw him. "What do you want?" Her voice was cold, no trace of the admiration or longing she'd once had for him.

Vincent didn't wait for an answer. He pushed past her and walked into the room, like he owned it. Marcus' eyes went wide, but Vincent closed the door behind him before he could say anything.

The room was tiny-a single bed with light green floral sheets, a desk, a small couch, and a bathroom in the corner. It was clean, but shabby-nothing like the luxury Vincent was used to.

Scarlett stood by the door, her arms crossed. "What are you doing?" She wasn't angry-just confused. Why was he here?

Vincent sat down on the couch, his expensive suit sticking out like a sore thumb against the faded fabric. He looked up at her. "I need a place to stay tonight. Do you mind?"

If he had to choose between her tiny dorm room and Marcus' equally tiny house, he'd pick hers. At least it smelled like her-like lavender and soap, not the cigar smoke that clung to Marcus' clothes.

Scarlett smelled alcohol on his breath. She sighed. "Fine. But I'll sleep on the couch. You can take the bed."

Chapter 141 Have Somewhere Else to Stay

Once, she would've rushed to make him comfortable-drawing him a bath, finding him clean clothes, tucking him in like he was a child. But that Scarlett was gone. She'd learned the hard way that he didn't appreciate her efforts.

She reached for the door, planning to grab a blanket from the closet for the couch, but Vincent said, "Scarlett, I need to take a shower."

He spoke like it was a command-like she was still his maid, not his soon-to-be ex-wife. He didn't want to ask her for anything, but he had no other choice. His suit was wrinkled, and he hated sleeping without a shower.

Scarlett turned around, her expression flat. "This isn't a hotel. The school has a public bathhouse around the corner. It's open until 10. You'll have to go there."

Vincent stared at her. He'd expected her to comply, to find a way to help him. But she just stood there, unyielding. For the first time, he realized-she wasn't going to bend to his will anymore.

And for some reason, that bothered him more than anything.

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