

No Second Baby, No You, Only Divorce - Silent Dreams Never Die — 401[964 words]

Chapter 401 Unanswered Calls

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Halfway through dinner, Xavier laid down his fork. He looked across the table at Vincent, who was eating slowly, and asked, “What’s your take on what Scarlett did?”

Vincent kept his eyes on his plate, pushing the food around with his fork, but at Xavier’s words, his hand stilled almost imperceptibly. After a moment, he replied, “It’s in the past now.”

Xavier frowned and pressed further, “What about going forward? Are you still considering trying for another child?”

Vincent set his own fork down and met Xavier’s gaze. “I haven’t made any plans. Even if we did, we’d need to wait until she’s fully recovered.”

He didn’t mention to Xavier that the incomplete procedure had left Scarlett with significant difficulties when it came to conceiving again.

Hearing Vincent’s response, Xavier let out a long sigh. “If I’d known it would come to this, I never would have pushed the two of you together in the first place.”

Vincent didn’t want to hear any more. He grabbed a napkin, wiped his mouth, and stood up. “I’m finished, Grandpa. I’ll be upstairs.”

Upstairs, Vincent flipped on the bedroom light.

The room had long since changed from how it looked when Scarlett lived there. When she was around, the bedding was always bright and colorful—floral patterns, bold prints. Now, his sheets and duvet covers were only ever black, white, or gray.

Some of Sabrina’s belongings were scattered around the room, looking completely out of place.

Vincent walked to the dresser, opened a drawer, and pulled out the signed divorce agreement inside.

Even though he had dictated the terms himself, he found his eyes skimming over the pages

once more,

Apart from the financial settlement—two billion dollars—Scarlett hadn't asked for anything else.

Not custody of their child, not the house, not any of the cars...

After all those years of marriage, all she walked away with was money.

Truth be told, the settlement he'd offered Scarlett wasn't especially generous.

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Chapter 401 Unanswered Calls

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What Vincent hadn't expected was that the woman who once put him above everything else was actually going through with the divorce.

For him, she had turned her back on her own family. But now, she was the one who had filed, and they were almost through the waiting period.

The thought brought a sharp, unexpected ache to his chest.

Just then, his phone rang.

Glancing at the screen, he saw it was Sabrina.

He answered, and her anxious voice came through immediately. "Vincent, Vanessa's running a fever."

Any lingering sadness was pushed aside. Vincent stood and strode out of the room.

When he arrived at the neighboring villa, Sabrina was cradling Vanessa on the couch, while Maria paced nervously nearby.

Vincent rushed over and scooped Vanessa into his arms without a word.

Sabrina stood and followed as Vincent headed for the door.

Maria instinctively moved to join them, but Sabrina noticed and stopped her quickly.
“Mom,

don’t need to come. Vincent and I can handle it.”

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As she spoke, Sabrina gave Maria a meaningful look.

Maria understood and lowered her voice to remind her, “Just make sure that child doesn’t say anything she shouldn’t.”

Sabrina patted Maria’s hand reassuringly. “Don’t worry; it’ll be fine.”

Hearing that, Maria finally seemed to relax.

At the hospital, Vincent handed Vanessa over to the triage nurse.

After a series of checks, the diagnosis came back—a bacterial infection, likely the flu.

The doctor ordered IV fluids and medication. Sabrina stayed with Vanessa while she received the IV, and Vincent handled the paperwork—filling out forms, paying the fees, picking up

the prescriptions.

He wasn’t familiar with the hospital’s layout and process. At the payment window, a staff member snapped at him when he presented the

presented the wrong form.

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Chapter 401 Unanswered Calls

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Vincent wasn't known for his patience. When the woman behind the glass raised her voice, he fixed her with a cold, penetrating stare.

He didn't say a word, just stood there at the window, his entire demeanor icy and intimidating. Sensing she'd overstepped, the woman quickly lowered her voice and mumbled, "Sorry, I'm just... **It's** been a hectic shift."

Vincent narrowed his eyes. After a long pause, he replied coolly, "In ten minutes, someone else will be at this window."

Then he turned and walked away.

The woman sat frozen in her seat, completely stunned.

If it had been anyone else, she might have thought it was an empty threat. But something about Vincent's presence—especially his eyes—made her feel like she'd been thrown into a freezer.

After picking up the medication and settling the bills, Vincent made his way back to the treatment area where Vanessa was receiving her IV.

But as he walked, his thoughts drifted back to Scarlett.

Kids often ran fevers—on and off, sometimes for no obvious reason. Vanessa had always had a weaker constitution, so she got sick more often than most.

Since she was little, she'd had one minor health issue after another, and Scarlett had taken her to urgent care or the pediatrician more than twenty times.

In the beginning, Scarlett would text or call him, asking him to come home, to help out, to be there for their daughter.

But as time went on, the messages gradually stopped. She handled everything alone, taking Vanessa to appointments, waiting in exam rooms; managing it all by herself.

The memory made it hard for Vincent to keep his composure.

He pulled out his phone and called Scarlett.

The line rang through, but no one picked up.

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No Second Baby, No You, Only Divorce - Silent Dreams Never Die — 402[816 words]

Chapter 402 The Threat That Silences

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Vincent stood in the hospital courtyard, determined to keep calling until Scarlett picked up.

He dialed again and again, but there was no answer. After what felt like the thirtieth attempt, Sabrina finally came out of the hospital building.

Spotting Vincent in the courtyard, she walked over with a puzzled look. “Vincent, **is** everything alright?”

Hearing her voice, Vincent instinctively tilted his phone screen away, not wanting Sabrina to see he was trying to reach Scarlett.

As she got closer, she noticed the subtle movement. When he angled the screen, she caught a brief glance down at it.

She didn’t see it clearly, but she could guess who he was calling.

Vincent turned off the screen before answering. “It’s nothing.”

Then he quickly changed the subject. “How’s Vanessa? Any improvement?”

Sabrina offered a gentle smile. “Yes, she’s sleeping now. I came out to find you since you’d been gone a while.”

Vincent just nodded, saying nothing more.

Just then, his phone screen lit up.

He picked it up instantly, but when he saw it was only a notification, disappointment flashed across his face.

Sabrina saw it all. Instead of holding back, she asked directly, “Are you trying to call Scarlett?”

Not wanting Sabrina to get the wrong idea, Vincent paused before replying, “No.”

Sabrina frowned at his answer.

She had seen it with her own eyes, yet Vincent was lying to her,

The growing weariness she felt toward him was now mixing with a prickling sense of fear.

Of all the men she knew, aside from Damian, Vincent held the most status and influence.

While Sabrina loved being adored, when it came to choosing who to be with, she wasn’t blind or foolish.

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Chapter 402 The Threat That Silences

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With that in mind, she took a step closer to Vincent, linking her arm with his. Softly, she said, “New Year’s is coming up. The school gave us a few days off. Will you come back to Nebula City with me to visit my dad?”

Vincent

put his phone away. “Alright.”

He never hesitated when it came to Sabrina’s requests.

Seeing him agree so readily, Sabrina broke into a wide smile.

She couldn’t help thinking she’d worried too much—Vincent was already wrapped around her finger.

Back in the hospital room, Vincent took another photo of Vanessa.

In it, she lay pale against the narrow hospital bed, fast asleep but with her brows tightly furrowed.

He sent the photo to Scarlett. There was still no response.

In his memory, Scarlett had always handled everything concerning Vanessa herself.

But now...

When Scarlett arrived at Claire's apartment with Damian, Zachary was in the kitchen, busy heating up some broth.

Seeing them return, Zachary said quietly, "She just fell asleep. Maybe give her a little while before you go in."

Scarlett nodded. "Okay."

Watching Zachary move skillfully around the small kitchen, Scarlett remembered what Damian had told her—that Zachary had feelings for Claire.

But after everything that had happened, she wondered if he still felt the same.

Feeling utterly drained, Scarlett let Damian guide her to the sofa,

Damian draped a soft throw blanket over her and gently smoothed her hair. "I'll go see if Zachary needs a hand."

Scarlett nodded and soon drifted off on the couch.

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Chapter 402 The Threat That Silences

She hadn't been asleep long when she heard Claire's voice, strained and urgent, call out, "Scarlett!"

Scarlett jolted awake and hurried into the bedroom.

Only a small bedside lamp was on, casting a dim, warm glow in the room.

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Scarlett sat down on the edge of the mattress, taking Claire's hand. "I'm right here. I'm here."

Claire gripped her hand tightly, her voice shaky with anxiety. "The pills? Where are the pills?"

Scarlett pulled the small pill case from her pocket. Before she could even explain, Claire snatched it from her.

Without waiting for instructions, Claire popped both emergency contraceptive pills into her mouth at once.

She then grabbed the glass of water on the nightstand and took two large gulps.

Setting the glass down, she stared at Scarlett in a panic. "Scarlett, I didn't even feel them. Did I swallow them? Maybe you should go get me another dose?"

Scarlett understood Claire's fear completely. Keeping her own voice calm and steady, she held Claire's hand and reassured her, "Claire, you took them. I watched you. It's going to be okay. Trust me."

Claire's breathing began to slow, the panic subsiding a little. "Okay," she whispered.

Just then, a soft knock came at the bedroom door. Damian's voice followed from the hallway. "Scarlett, Felix is here."

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**No Second Baby, No You, Only Divorce -
Silent Dreams Never Die — 403[870 words
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Chapter 403 Recounting the Assault

Hearing Damian, Scarlett called back, “Okay, I’ll be right out.”

She then turned to Claire with concern. “Do you feel up to seeing Felix?”

Claire paused, took a steadying breath, and nodded. “Yes, I should.”

Scarlett helped her into a robe and supported her as they walked out to the living room.
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Felix was already seated on the couch. Zachary was handing him a glass of water, and Damian was speaking to him in a low voice nearby.

The sound of the bedroom door opening made Damian stop mid-sentence.

Once Scarlett had guided Claire to an armchair, Damian and Zachary quietly moved toward the kitchen, giving them space.

Scarlett had meant to leave too, to let Claire and Felix talk privately, but Claire held onto her hand tightly, a silent plea for her to stay.

So, Scarlett settled on the arm of Claire’s chair.

Felix asked Claire what had happened. She hesitated for a few seconds before beginning, her voice quiet but clear.

That day, she had gotten dressed up for her date. But as soon as she stepped out of the elevator in her building, Elias was there, blocking her path.

Claire had cried out, but he forced her back into the elevator.

It went straight back up to her floor.

Elias found her keys and used them to open her apartment door, dragging her inside.

Once the door was shut, the interrogation began.

Why wasn’t she answering his calls?

Was she breaking up with him, or was marriage suddenly back on the table?

Why was she seeing other guys?

What did she actually want?

Had she found someone else?

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Chapter 403 Recounting the Assault

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Back then, even through her terror, Claire had found a shred of courage. She told him, “Get married? After all this time? I waited for you for years, Elias. I’m done waiting. I don’t want to

marry you anymore.

“You love your freedom, so I’m setting you free. You can be with whoever you want, without me in the picture. Isn’t that what you always said you wanted?

“Elias, we’ve been living in different worlds. I don’t love you anymore, and you never really loved me. I don’t even want to rehash the past.

“Just leave. I can pretend tonight never happened.”

Claire had pointed to the door, her gaze cold and distant.

Once, her eyes had always been soft with affection for him. Even after his countless betrayals, she had found ways to forgive.

Now, she was just exhausted. Done. She wanted nothing more to do with him.

Her words didn’t make him back down. They only made him angrier.

Elias’ expression darkened. He grabbed her arm, yanking her close, and kissed her—a hard, biting, possessive kiss.

He wouldn’t let go.

Claire hit him, pushed at his chest, cried, and struggled.

But Elias showed no restraint, no mercy. He forced her onto the sofa and assaulted her.

He did it twice.

If Zachary hadn't shown up when he did, there likely would have been a third time, a fourth...

Remembering these details now made Claire feel suffocated, a fresh wave of pain and panic washing over her.

Scarlett, sitting beside her, could feel Claire's body trembling.

Telling the story was like tearing open a wound that hadn't even begun to heal.

Felix was a lawyer. He'd heard countless tragic stories and met every kind of client.

Claire's experience sickened him, but what was done was done. They couldn't change the past.

After listening carefully, Felix finally spoke, his voice gentle but firm. "You need to file a police

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Chapter 403 Recounting the Assault

report. I'll represent you through the entire process."

Claire nodded. "Okay."

For the past two days, Scarlett and Zachary had barely left her side.

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Claire told herself she had to be strong. She couldn't let the people who truly cared for her keep worrying like this.

So, she had made her decision. She would go to the police.

After Felix finished speaking, Claire reached for her phone and powered it on.

She hadn't dared to look at it since the incident.

But now, she had found a sliver of courage. She was determined to start facing things again.

As the phone booted up, notification after notification flashed on the screen—social media likes, news alerts, app updates...

Among them were dozens of text messages from Elias.

Claire’s finger hovered, then she opened them.

The first ones were frantic apologies. “Claire, I’m so sorry, please forgive me. I was out of my mind that night, that’s the only reason I did what I did. But we’ve been together so long, it’s not like we haven’t been intimate before... Please don’t be angry with me, okay?”

“Claire, why aren’t you answering? Please don’t tell anyone about what happened, okay? Please.”

“I’m sorry, I know I was wrong. Just forgive me. I promise, it will never happen again. I swear, from now on, you’ll be the only one.”

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No Second Baby, No You, Only Divorce - Silent Dreams Never Die — 404[943 words]

Awakened Housewife: Ignore Betrayer’s Begs

Chapter 404 Blackmail

“Claire? Are you going to answer me or not?”

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“Claire, don’t act all innocent now. There’s nothing of yours I haven’t seen or touched. Why play the victim?”

“Who do you think would want

think would want you after me, anyway?”

“Claire, are you ignoring me? Can’t you say something?”

“Listen, you’d better not even think about going to the police. If you do, I’ll send the videos of us in bed to your parents, your sister—everyone you know. Let’s see how your sweet, innocent daytime persona holds up when they all hear how you sound at night.”

The last message had a short video file attached below it.

There was no question what it contained.

Claire didn’t have the courage to open it. The hands holding her phone began to shake violently.

Scarlett noticed immediately and moved closer, wrapping a supportive arm around her shoulders. “Claire, what is it?”

Claire slowly stood, leaning heavily on Scarlett. Her voice was a raw whisper. “Scarlett... I can’t report it. I won’t go to the police.”

If those videos ever got out, Claire knew she would never be able to face anyone again.

Once on her feet, she began shuffling toward her bedroom.

Felix sensed the drastic shift and spoke up quickly, “Ms. Wright, are you really going to let the person who assaulted you walk away?”

Hearing this, Claire flinched as if struck. “No one assaulted me!” she cried out, her voice cracking. “No one did!”

After the outburst, she continued her slow retreat to her room.

“Ms. Wright,” Felix pressed, his tone urgent but calm, “if he’s threatening you, that only adds to the severity of his crimes. It’s coercion.”

Claire shook her head, tears now streaming silently down her cheeks. “I’m not reporting it. I’m

not.”

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Chapter 404 Blackmail

With that, she disappeared into her bedroom and shut the door.

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Scarlett turned to Felix with an apologetic look. “Mr. Wilson, let me go talk to her. I’m sorry you came all this way.”

Felix gave an understanding nod. “Of course.”

Inside the bedroom, Scarlett found Claire slumped on the floor beside the bed, her body wracked with silent, heaving sobs.

Scarlett knelt down and placed a gentle hand on her back. “Claire, what did he say?”

Claire lifted her head, her eyes swollen and rimmed with a frightening red. “He’s a monster, Scarlett,” she whispered, the words thick with tears. “He took videos... of us... without me knowing. He’s threatening to send them to my family if I go to the police.”

Scarlett felt a cold wave of shock and disgust. For a moment, she was speechless.

After collecting herself, she asked softly, “Claire, are you sure you can just let this go? Let him win?”

Claire threw her arms around Scarlett, burying her face in her shoulder. “I need to think,” she choked out between sobs. “Please, just give me a little time to think.”

Scarlett didn’t push. She simply held her friend, offering the quiet solidarity of her

But in her heart, Scarlett feared she knew how this would end.

presence.

Claire’s parents were deeply concerned with social standing and appearance. If those videos were leaked, they would likely blame Claire for the scandal, not support her through it.

For years, Claire had worked tirelessly building her online brand, creating content to prove to her parents that she was successful and independent.

But in their eyes, being a social media influencer wasn't a "real" career. No matter how much money she made or how many gifts she bought them, they never saw her work as legitimate.

Her relationship with them was already fragile. If Elias released those videos, it would shatter what little ground she had left.

Scarlett understood why Claire was hesitating.

Claire cried until she was utterly spent, finally falling into a fitful sleep with her head on Scarlett's shoulder.

Scarlett sat motionless for a long time. When Claire's breathing finally deepened into sleep, she carefully shifted her friend's head onto a pillow and stood up.

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Chapter 404 Blackmail

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Making sure not to wake her, Scarlett slipped out of the room.

In the living room, Zachary, Damian, and Felix all looked at her with expectant, worried **faces**.

Scarlett's throat was dry. She poured herself a glass of water from the pitcher on the counter and drank it before addressing Zachary. "We need to give her a little more time. She needs to process this."

Zachary's concern was etched deeply on his face. "How is she, really?"

Scarlett just shook her head, unable to find the right words.

That simple gesture was answer enough—Claire was not okay.

Zachary looked pained, helpless in the face of a situation where comfort seemed impossible.

Damian had been watching Scarlett intently. Seeing the profound exhaustion in her posture, he felt a sharp pang of sympathy.

After a moment's hesitation, he walked over to her. "Come with me," he said quietly.

Scarlett looked up, confused. "Where?"

"To the hospital," Damian said. "Come with me to see my mother."

Scarlett flustered, her brow furrowing. "I can't. I need to be here for Claire."

Seeing her immediate refusal, Damian gently took her hand. "Zachary and Felix are both here. Claire will be safe. You look like you're about to collapse yourself." His voice was soft but insistent. "Just for a little while."

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No Second Baby, No You, Only Divorce - Silent Dreams Never Die — 405[862 words]

Chapter 405 A Mother's Kindness

Even so, Scarlett instinctively resisted. "Damian, I really shouldn't go."

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Damian gave her no room for argument. He simply took her hand and led her toward the door.

“It’s

my

mother who asked to see you,” he said as he guided her out into the hallway.

Scarlett paused. “I...”

She didn’t even get to finish her refusal before Damian was gently steering her Claire’s apartment building.

away

from

When they arrived at the hospital, Ruth was wearing a soft surgical mask.

She lay reclined on the hospital bed, and even in a standard patient gown, she carried an air of graceful composure.

Hearing the door open, Ruth immediately removed the mask.

She sat up, adjusting herself against the raised backrest, and turned her attention to Scarlett.

Taking in Scarlett’s pale, tired face, Ruth’s brow furrowed with concern. “You’ve lost weight,” she said, her voice warm but worried. “And you look exhausted.”

Scarlett shook her head lightly. “I’m alright. What about you, Mrs. Langley? Have you been resting well these last few days?”

Touched by her asking, Ruth offered a gentle smile. “Yes, I’ve been resting as much as one can in a place like this.”

As she spoke, she extended a hand toward Scarlett. “Come here, dear. Let me get a proper look at you.”

Scarlett obliged, moving closer to the bedside with a hint of shyness.

Ruth gently placed a hand on Scarlett’s cheek, her touch kind. “You look like you’re carrying the world on your shoulders. Is something troubling you?”

Scarlett hadn't expected the direct question. She was momentarily startled, then nodded. "Yes."

Ruth had a calm, approachable presence—nothing like Amanda's often intimidating severity.

Hearing Scarlett's admission, Ruth's smile softened further. "If you feel comfortable sharing, I'd

like to hear about it."

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Chapter 405 A Mother's Kindness

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After a brief hesitation, the words began to spill from Scarlett almost without her conscious thought.

But as soon as she finished recounting Claire's ordeal, a wave of panic hit her. Had she just violated her friend's trust?

Before that fear could take root, Ruth asked, her tone still warm, "Do you think it would be possible for me to meet your friend?"

Despite her worry about overstepping, when Ruth asked so sincerely, Scarlett found herself nodding. "If you're willing, Mrs. Langley, of course."

Ruth smiled. "Shall we go now?"

Scarlett sounded concerned. "But you need your rest to recover. You shouldn't—"

Ruth was already pushing the thin hospital blanket aside and reaching for her slippers before Scarlett could finish.

Seeing Scarlett's continued hesitation, Ruth sat up fully and looked at her. "Scarlett, if you are well, Damian is well. And if Damian is well, then I am well. It might sound simplistic, but when Damian cares for someone, I choose to support her. Seeing you so troubled hurts me. If there is anything I can do to help, I want to try. Even if it doesn't change the outcome, the effort

matters.”

Scarlett stood frozen, stunned by Ruth’s words.

Because she wanted Damian to be happy, she wanted Scarlett to be happy too.

Wasn’t that what a parent’s love should feel like?

Amanda had never made her feel anything close to this.

Seeing the genuine kindness in Ruth’s eyes, Scarlett felt her own eyes sting. “Thank you, Mrs. Langley.”

Ruth gently brushed away the tear that escaped from the corner of Scarlett’s eye. “Let’s go. Claire’s situation is what’s important now. Every moment we wait is another moment her attacker feels secure.”

Scarlett nodded, then stood and carefully helped Ruth to her feet.

As the two women walked out of the hospital room together, Damian, who had been leaning against the wall in the corridor, raised an eyebrow in mild surprise.

A moment later, a soft, understanding smile touched his lips.

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Chapter 405 A Mother’s Kindness

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Seeing him standing in their path, Ruth feigned annoyance. “Don’t block the hallway, dear. You’re not a piece of furniture.”

Damian chuckled softly and stepped aside.

Scarlett supported Ruth as they made their slow way toward the elevator bank.

When a car arrived, they all stepped inside.

Scarlett stood beside Ruth, but her eyes were fixed on their blurred reflections in the brushed metal elevator doors.

In the reflection, Damian was smiling softly, and Ruth wore a look of gentle determination. Only Scarlett's own expression seemed clouded with confusion and worry.

Damian came from a world of old money and influence; Ruth moved through the highest circles of society.

How could people like them ever truly accept someone like her?

Before she could follow that painful thought further, the elevator chimed and the doors slid open on the first floor.

Just outside, waiting for an elevator going up, stood Vincent and Sabrina.

They hadn't been holding hands, but the moment Sabrina's eyes landed on Scarlett, she reached over and deliberately laced her fingers through Vincent's.

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No Second Baby, No You, Only Divorce - Silent Dreams Never Die — 406[927 words]

Chapter 406 A Silent War

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Without a word, she was sending a clear message to Scarlett-Vincent was hers.

Seeing this, Scarlett felt no anger, only a low, derisive snort escaping her.

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Vincent had seen Scarlett too. His gaze locked onto her, his brow furrowed, his eyes burning with a dangerous intensity.

Scarlett could feel the heat of his stare, but she refused to meet it. Instead, she turned her face away, looking anywhere else.

Damian noticed Vincent's fixed gaze as well. A pang of possessive irritation shot through him, and he wordlessly shifted to stand directly in front of Scarlett, cutting off Vincent's line of sight.

Once she was shielded, Vincent's eyes lifted to Damian.

In the heavy silence, it felt as if a thousand unspoken challenges had already passed between them.

Vincent's expression was icy, his gaze sharp enough to cut.

Damian, meanwhile, wore a mischievous, smug grin that was utterly unconcealed—bold and straightforward.

Ruth, sensing the thick tension, chose that moment to speak up brightly, "Oh, my future daughter-in-law is just the sweetest! Seeing that I'm under the weather, she visits me every single day, checking in and taking such good care of me. Now she even says she wants to *take* me out for a change of scenery. Ah, I'm so terribly spoiled, really—it's almost too much good fortune!"

When Sabrina heard Ruth's words, she couldn't help but roll her eyes in disdain.

As for Vincent, his fingers curled subtly into tight fists at his sides.

So, it seemed Scarlett had already met Damian's family.

And it appeared Ruth genuinely liked her.

At that moment, a strange, suffocating weight settled in Vincent's chest. He wanted to speak, but

no words came.

Just like that, the two groups stood in a silent standoff for a long minute before finally parting

ways.

As Scarlett stepped out of the elevator, she couldn't resist glancing back over her shoulder.

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Chapter 406 A Silent War

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Vincent was still watching her, his eyes now filled with what looked like deep-seated resentment.

Scarlett said nothing. She simply adjusted her support for Ruth and walked away.

Vincent stood frozen at the elevator bank, turning to watch them go until the doors slid shut. His heart felt like a stone sinking in his chest.

Noticing his dark mood, Sabrina couldn't hold back. "What's wrong?" she asked.

Vincent's face hardened. He strode into the waiting elevator and replied flatly, "Nothing."

After that, he fell silent.

Sabrina stood beside him in the enclosed space, feeling the chill radiating from his body.

For some reason, a peculiar unease began to coil in her stomach.

Even with Vincent right next to her, she was gripped by the sudden, terrifying feeling that she couldn't really hold onto him.

Damian drove, with Scarlett and Ruth in the back seat. Throughout the ride, Ruth kept up a steady stream of gentle conversation with Scarlett.

She asked about Scarlett's favorite foods, whether she preferred dresses or jeans, her go-to color, if there was anything she'd been wanting lately, and whether she had a favorite place to visit...

Ruth asked about a dozen little things. Though Scarlett's mind was clearly preoccupied with worry for Claire, she still answered each question patiently.

Soon, the car pulled up in front of Claire's apartment building.

As the

group

made their way upstairs, they moved quietly, careful not to make too much noise.

Felix was still on the sofa. Hearing the door, he glanced over and, upon seeing Ruth, stood up politely. "Mrs. Langley, you're here too."

Ruth offered Felix a warm smile. "Yes, I'm here to help Scarlett sort out a bit of trouble."

Felix nodded with a faint, understanding smile and stepped aside.

Zachary had been standing vigil by Claire's bedroom door. Seeing them return, he walked over slowly. "Mrs. Langley."

Seeing the deep worry etched on Zachary's face, Ruth gave him a reassuring look. "Don't you

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Chapter 406 A Silent War

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worry. It's going to be alright. Let me go in and see her."

Hearing her confident tone, Zachary's eyes grew suspiciously bright. "Okay. Thank you."

Before entering the bedroom, Ruth turned back to Scarlett. "Scarlett, come in with me."

Scarlett didn't hesitate. "Alright," she said, nodding.

She then helped support Ruth as they walked into Claire's bedroom together.

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Only a small bedside lamp was on. Claire was curled in a tight ball on the bed, utterly still.

It was impossible to tell if she was truly asleep or just pretending.

But the moment Ruth entered, she reached over and flipped the main light switch. The dim room was instantly flooded with bright light.

The moment the harsh light hit her, Claire—who hadn’t moved a muscle—instinctively yanked the comforter over her head.

Ruth walked straight to the bed and pulled the covers back down.

Exposed again, Claire threw her hands over her face, her body beginning to shake with silent, painful sobs.

Scarlett’s heart ached with worry, but seeing the firm, no-nonsense look on Ruth’s face, she didn’t dare interrupt.

Ruth stood beside the bed, her voice firm and clear. “Are you planning to hide in this dark room forever? Live in the shadows for the rest of your life? Let the person who did this to you walk away thinking he won?”

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No Second Baby, No You, Only Divorce - Silent Dreams Never Die — 407[851 words]

Claire was crying and shouting, “Get out! Just get out, all of you!”

She felt that no one could possibly understand the depth of her pain and shame.

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Finished

Everyone acted as if she wanted to let Elias off the hook. Didn't they think she wanted him to pay?

But Elias was holding those videos. If they got out, her career—her entire life—would be over.

Claire had a public profile. Those clips would go viral in an instant, setting off a chain reaction she could never contain.

Seeing that Claire wasn't listening, Ruth leaned down and firmly pried Claire's hands away from her face.

Claire struggled, fighting back with all her strength, but she was no match for Ruth's resolve.

Finally, Claire's face was fully exposed under the bright light. She squeezed her eyes shut against the glare, tears streaming from the corners.

She sobbed, a broken, raw sound. "Maybe I should just die. If I were dead, it would all be over."

Ruth cupped Claire's face gently but firmly. "Look at me, sweetheart," she said, her voice low and steady. "Just look at me and listen."

Then, Ruth straightened up.

Scarlett's heart ached for Claire, but she knew, deep down, that Ruth was right.

As her eyes adjusted, Claire slowly opened them. She saw Ruth standing beside the bed, then calmly unbuttoning her blouse and stepping out of her pants...

Until she was standing completely bare.

Seeing this, Scarlett gasped, "Mrs. Langley, you don't have to—"

She moved to grab something to cover her, but Ruth raised a hand to stop her. "It's alright."

Scarlett stood frozen, her own eyes filling with tears.

Seeing Ruth like this, Claire broke down into heaving sobs, tears falling like rain.

Ruth stood openly in the light, her hands at her sides. She looked directly into Claire's red-rimmed eyes.

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21:04 Wed, Jan 14

Chapter 407 A Lesson in Courage

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"Look," Ruth said, her voice clear and calm. "Once our clothes are off, we women—apart from height, weight, and shape—we're all pretty much the same. It's just a body. You have one, I have one, she has one. That wretched man is using your own sense of shame against you. Are you really going to let him?

"No, you can't. Every woman goes through these things. You have, I have, Scarlett has. It's part of life. Normal adults... who doesn't have that experience? So what if he sends those videos out? The one who should feel ashamed is him, not you. The one who will make people sick is him,

not you.

"When something like this happens, we cannot be afraid. We cannot back down. The more he threatens, the harder you have to fight back. You have to show him you're not an easy target he can bully forever."

Ruth's heartfelt words struck a deep chord in Claire.

Scarlett, too, was profoundly moved. What Ruth said was the honest truth.

In a situation like this, it all came down to who had more nerve.

If Claire could just get past that mental barrier, the rest would become manageable.

Seeing that Claire was listening, Scarlett moved to unbutton her own shirt.

Claire quickly stopped her. "Scarlett, don't. I understand now. I really do."

Hearing that, Scarlett's eyes welled up with tears of relief.

Then, Claire looked at Ruth and said softly, "Mrs. Langley... thank you. I know what I need to do

now.”

A warm, reassuring smile spread across Ruth’s face. “Good. I’m glad you see it clearly

Scarlett quickly gathered Ruth’s clothes and helped her dress.

Ruth gently patted Scarlett’s hand. “You’re a good girl,” she said tenderly

Overwhelmed with gratitude, Scarlett whispered, her voice thick with emotion, “Thank you, Mrs. Langley.”

Ruth smiled. “I’ve been around the block a few more times than you have. I’ve seen it all. When

a man has no decency, you have to learn to shed your own unnecessary pride.”

Scarlett nodded, then turned her gaze back to Claire on the bed.

Claire was already looking at her.

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21:04 Wed, Jan 14 d

Chapter 407 A Lesson in Courage

Their eyes met, and a small, understanding smile passed between them.

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Finished

Once Ruth was fully dressed, she said to Scarlett, “Come on, let’s step out and give Ms. Wright some time to pull herself together.”

When Scarlett and Ruth walked out of the bedroom, the men in the living room immediately gathered around.

Damian’s eyes went straight to Scarlett’s face. Seeing the tension had eased from her brow, he finally let out a quiet breath of relief.

Noticing her son’s expression, Ruth smiled. “It’s handled. Now, take me home.”

Damian agreed without hesitation. “Of course.”

Scarlett stood there, looking at Damian in quiet surprise.

When she thought about it, while Ruth had been the one to step in, how could any of this have been resolved so smoothly without Damian's quiet support in the background?

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No Second Baby, No You, Only Divorce - Silent Dreams Never Die — 408[888 words]

21:04 Wed, Jan 14

Awakened Housewife: Ignore Betrayer's Begs.

Chapter 408 Moonlit Promises

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From the moment he had suggested going to the hospital to see Ruth, he had likely been setting everything in motion.

Once Scarlett pieced it together and looked up, she saw Ruth walking toward Damian.

But after taking a few steps, Ruth paused and glanced back at Scarlett. "Scarlett, I'm heading back now. Once everything here is settled, don't forget to come visit me at the hospital."

Scarlett quickly replied, "Of course, I will."

Ruth offered a gentle smile and added, "Well then, I'll be off. And when the holidays come, make sure you stop by the house, alright?"

Scarlett hesitated, the words of refusal catching in her throat.

Ruth had rushed over late at night to help sort out this mess, and she had done something as vulnerable as disrobing earlier to make her point.

Most people wouldn't have gone that far.

In the end, Scarlett neither refused nor agreed outright.

Ruth didn't press her. She simply smiled, said her goodbyes to the others, and left Claire's apartment.

Damian followed Ruth out, but as they neared the elevator, he turned back to look at Scarlett once more. A faint, knowing smile played on his lips. He raised an eyebrow playfully and gave her a quick, unmistakable wink.

Seeing Damian's teasing, roguish grin—though it should have felt presumptuous or too forward—Scarlett found herself thinking it was actually... kind of charming.

Even after she looked away, the image of his mischievous smile lingered in her mind.

Shortly after Damian and Ruth left, Claire emerged from the bedroom.

Hearing the door open, everyone's attention shifted toward her.

Claire had changed into fresh clothes and had tidied her disheveled hair.

Now, the raw fear and distress in her eyes had finally receded.

After stepping out, Claire walked up to Felix, gathering her courage. "Mr. Wilson, would you accompany me to the police station now?"

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Chapter 408 Moonlit Promises

🔒 (55)

Finished

Hearing this, Felix allowed a slight smile. "It would be my privilege."

Zachary let out a breath he seemed to have been holding, though a shadow of concern **still** lingered on his face.

In the end, the whole group went to the police station together.

Felix went inside with Claire to file the report, while Scarlett and Zachary waited in the lobby.

After about an hour, the initial statement was complete.

When they came out, the officers explained that Claire would need to go to the hospital for a medical examination to collect forensic evidence.

As the group exited the police station, Scarlett immediately spotted Damian leaning against his car door.

The moon was out tonight, casting a soft silver light. He stood by the vehicle, a long wool coat making him look both tall and solid. His features were sharp and striking, almost sculpted in the dim light.

Seeing them emerge, he straightened up and took a few steps forward, clearly intending to approach Scarlett.

But when his eyes landed on Claire, he stopped short.

No matter what, Claire's well-being was the priority now.

Claire noticed Damian's hesitation. She didn't want everyone to feel they had to walk on eggshells around her.

She turned to Scarlett. "Scarlett, let Mr. Wilson and Zachary take me to the hospital. I think Damian probably has something he wants to say to you."

Before Scarlett could respond, Claire was already heading toward Felix's car.

As she got **in**, she heard Scarlett call out, "Claire, it's going to be okay. No matter what, I'm right here with you."

Hearing this, Claire managed a small, genuine smile and nodded. "Yeah. I know."

Scarlett made a little cheering gesture for her and added, "When this is all over, I'm taking you out for drinks."

Claire agreed softly, "**It's** a deal."

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21:04 Wed, Jan 14 d

Chapter 408 Moonlit Promises

With that, Felix drove off.

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The moment their taillights disappeared, Damian closed the distance to Scarlett.

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When he stopped in front of her, he looked down, a deep, warm smile spreading across his face.

As he neared, Scarlett caught the clean, subtle scent of his soap or shower gel, mixed with the faintest hint of tobacco.

It wasn't overpowering, just a light, pleasant aroma.

Seeing Damian remain silent, Scarlett looked up at him. "Thank you," she said.

Damian slid his hands into his pockets, adopting a casually cool posture. "I just didn't want you to carry that worry anymore," he said.

Hearing this, Scarlett replied softly, "Mhm," and added, "It's handled now."

Damian pretended not to hear that last part. He leaned down, bringing his eyes level with hers, and asked with a playful grin, "When you said thank you... did you really mean it?"

Scarlett instinctively started to nod, but then hesitated, anticipating what he might say next.

Seeing her reaction, Damian reached out and gently booped the tip of her nose with his finger. "If you really want to thank me," he said, his voice low and inviting, "then come watch a movie

with me."

Hearing this, Scarlett looked at him, slightly flustered. "You..."

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No Second Baby, No You, Only Divorce Silent Dreams Never Die — 409[832 words]

Chapter 409 A Mischievous Movie Date

She thought Damian was going to bring up her earlier promise again.

But, to her surprise, it was just this simple request.

Damian raised an eyebrow slightly. “What? You don’t want to?”

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Scarlett shook her head. “No, it’s not that. It’s just been a really long time since I’ve been to the movies.”

Hearing this, Damian replied, “Yeah? Funny, I haven’t been in a while either.”

Scarlett was a little surprised and asked without thinking, “Really?”

Damian reached out and gave her earlobe a gentle, playful tug—a light punishment. But when he spoke, his voice was warm with amusement. “Really.”

Then, he leaned in close to Scarlett’s ear, his warm lips nearly brushing against it, and said cheerfully, “I’ve been waiting to go with you.”

He sounded sincere, but Scarlett wasn’t sure she should believe him.

She looked up at him. “But I’ve heard you have more dates than ties. I’m sure plenty of people would love to go to the movies with you.”

Damian kept smiling. “Like you said—that’s just what you heard.”

Scarlett paused for a moment and didn't press further.

Damian opened the passenger door, placing a protective hand on the roof. "Your chariot awaits, my lady."

Hearing him call her "my lady", Scarlett couldn't help but think he probably used that line on everyone. Maybe he used it most often with Sabrina.

With that thought, the initial flutter of pleasure faded.

Once she was in the car, Damian leaned across to buckle her seatbelt.

Downtown, Damian parked and took Scarlett to a multiplex.

He seemed to know the routine—picking up the pre-booked tickets, buying a tub of popcorn, grabbing drinks from the concession stand...

Once everything was ready, they still had over ten minutes before the showtime.

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Chapter 409 A Mischievous Movie Date

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Finished

He set the snacks on a small lobby table and announced he wanted to take a few pictures.

After snapping photos of the drinks and the ticket stubs, he turned to Scarlett. "Let's get a selfie

too."

Scarlett felt a little reluctant, but remembering how Damian had helped resolve Claire's crisis, she felt she couldn't refuse.

She offered a small smile. "Okay."

Damian held up his phone. On the screen, their faces were close together.

Scarlett smiled softly, a faint dimple appearing at the corner of her mouth. Damian leaned in a little closer.

On the screen, they looked surprisingly compatible.

After a couple of shots, while Scarlett was still smiling at the camera, Damian suddenly turned his head and planted a quick kiss on her cheek.

At the same instant, he captured the moment.

Scarlett barely had time to react before Damian finished taking the photo and slipped his phone back into his pocket.

When she turned to him, he was smiling—a gentle, fond smile, his eyes even holding a hint of hopefulness.

Before Scarlett could say anything, he spoke first, “Didn’t that look like a scene from an engagement photo shoot?”

Scarlett looked at his mischievous expression and didn’t answer.

He was smiling, but Scarlett felt there was something a little practiced about it.

Seeing her silence, Damian pretended to be hurt. He leaned his head playfully against her shoulder and whined, “Come on, doesn’t it?”

Scarlett turned her face away and noticed people were starting to line up at the theater entrance.

She stood up. “They’re letting people in. We should go.”

Hearing this, Damian glanced over—sure enough, a few couples were already heading inside.

Seeing Scarlett was eager to go in, Damian reluctantly got up.

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Chapter 409 A Mischievous Movie Date

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Finished

He carried the popcorn and drinks while Scarlett held the tickets.

After the ticket scan, they found their auditorium and seats.

Once seated, Damian noticed that the people in front, behind, and beside them were all couples.

Seeing this, he couldn't help a small, satisfied smile.

When the movie started, the theater fell into darkness and quiet.

Damian had chosen the film himself, following online advice to pick a horror movie.

He had even allowed himself to imagine Scarlett getting scared and burying her face in his shoulder, giving him the perfect excuse to put his arm around her.

Just the thought made him feel a little giddy, and a soft chuckle escaped him.

Hearing him laugh, Scarlett turned curiously and whispered, "What's so funny?"

Damian grinned, a mischievous glint in his eye. "You'll see."

Seeing his mysterious expression, Scarlett didn't ask anything else.

After the trailers ended, the main feature began.

Within just a few minutes, the scenes turned gruesome and tense.

Damian wasn't really watching the movie—he spent the whole time secretly watching Scarlett.

He noticed she remained perfectly still and calm through every jump scare and bloody scene.

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No Second Baby, No You, Only Divorce

Silent Dreams Never Die — 410[883 words]

Chapter 410 A Plan That Backfires

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Even when startled, she'd just close her eyes briefly, never flinching or seeking refuge against Damian.

In the row ahead, a young woman was already clinging to her date in fright.

The young man seized the opportunity to wrap a protective arm around her, murmuring reassurances, "It's okay. I've got you."

Beside them, another woman had buried her face in her boyfriend's chest. As he held her close, he leaned down and stole a kiss.

Throughout the dark theater, everyone seemed wrapped up in their own intimate moments- everyone except Scarlett. Her heart remained as still as a deep lake while her eyes stayed fixed on the screen.

The calmer she was, the more it irritated Damian.

By the end, he was full-on sulking.

He hadn't absorbed a single plot point, but he'd certainly stewed in his own frustration.

While he was glowering at the screen, a particularly gruesome jump-scare flashed up. Damian jolted in his seat and instinctively shrank toward Scarlett.

Noticing him edge closer, she turned with a curious, slightly puzzled look. "Are you scared?" she whispered.

Damian lifted his head and glared at her, indignant. "Me? Scared?"

Scarlett's gaze drifted down to Damian's hand, which was gripping a fold of her sweater sleeve.

Seeing her notice, Damian slowly, deliberately loosened his fingers.

The movie rolled on, but Damian had lost all interest.

Scarlett, however, seemed to be getting into it, even beginning to enjoy the suspense.

Damian sat fidgeting, restless, feeling a knot of irritation in his chest—thoroughly uncomfortable and tempted to just walk out.

To soothe his simmering mood, he pulled out his phone. The screen lit up, showing the candid photo of him kissing Scarlett's cheek.

Even though the evening hadn't gone as he'd fantasized, a warm flicker still passed through him

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21:04 Wed, Jan 14

Chapter 410 A Plan That Backfires

seeing the picture.

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Finished

He opened his social media app and posted the photos—the movie ticket stubs, the popcorn, and the selfie with Scarlett.

As a caption, he wrote, “You arrived with the moonlight.”

After hitting post, he tucked his phone away.

Seeing Scarlett was genuinely engrossed now, he decided not to disturb her.

At this moment, whether the movie was good or bad hardly mattered.

What mattered was having her sitting right beside him.

The post quickly gained traction, shooting toward the top of trending feeds.

Comments and reposts poured in from all directions.

Meanwhile, Daniel, who was hanging out with Harris, saw the post on his own feed.

When he recognized Scarlett in the photo with Damian, he muttered angrily, “That’s just shameless.”

Hearing the curse, Harris glanced over. “What’s up?”

Daniel shoved his phone toward Harris. “Look at this.”

Harris took the phone, glanced at the image, and handed it back with a slight smile. “They look pretty good together, actually.”

Hearing that, Daniel scowled. “Good together? Are you kidding me?”

Harris asked, amused, “What’s wrong with it?”

Daniel was getting worked up. “Whose side are you on, anyway?”

Harris just sighed and shook his head. “I’m just calling it like I see it.”

Daniel didn’t want to argue further. “Whatever. Vincent belongs with Sabrina. Who Scarlett fools around with is none of my business.”

With that, he saved the photo again, opened his messaging app, and sent it directly to Vincent.

This

way, Vincent would see clearly what kind of person Scarlett really was.

Maybe then he’d commit himself even more completely to Sabrina.

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Chapter 410 A Plan That Backfires

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Harris leaned over, saw Daniel sending the photo, and said with a hint of reproach, “You shouldn’t stir things up like this.”

Daniel pocketed his phone and shot Harris a dismissive look. “Stay out of it.”

At the hospital, after Vanessa’s fever finally broke, she drifted into a deep sleep.

Vincent sat by the hospital bed, looking down at his daughter’s pale, delicate face, his heart aching with a tender pity.

Just then, his phone screen lit up.

Vincent glanced over instinctively. Part of him hoped—maybe even expected—a message at this hour would be from Scarlett.

After all, Vanessa was her daughter. A mother wouldn’t just ignore that, would she?

He picked up the phone.

What he saw was an intimate photo of Scarlett and Damian, cheek to cheek.

A cold, hard tension seized his chest. His fingers clenched around the phone until they trembled.

He turned the screen off and looked back at Vanessa, so small and fragile in the stark hospital bed.

At the age when she needed her mother most, her mother was out sharing romantic moments with someone else.

The thought was a physical pain in his chest.

He gently brushed a strand of hair from Vanessa’s forehead, then stood up abruptly, anger tightening his shoulders.

Just as he was about to stride out of the room, Sabrina walked in.

Seeing the stormy look on his face and his intent to leave, she asked with concern, “Vincent, what’s wrong? Where are you going?”

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Awakened Housewife: Ignore Betrayer's Begs

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