

LOVE UNBREAKABLE

Chapter 2371



Alec was rendered speechless.

Once he was free, he vowed to get back at Jemma for this setup.

How infuriating!

Meanwhile, by the car, the moonlight illuminated Nicole, casting Jarrod's brooding face in an eerie light.

This triggered a visceral reaction in Nicole.

She began to resist vehemently, pushing against Jarrod.

"Get away from me.

Get away.

.

Leave me alone.

You jerk.

"

Nicole struggled fiercely, trying to free herself.

“Let go of me.

Jerk.

.

”

Jarrood’s grip on her chin was firm, effectively silencing her.

“You want me to leave?” His voice was icy and threatening.

“Then what?”

“Then.

.

” Her head pounding, Nicole mumbled, “Just.

.

I don’t want you.

.

Leave.

.

Get lost!”

“Whom do you want to get lost?” Jarrood’s eyes were cold and piercing.

Despite her disoriented state, Nicole seemed surprisingly lucid.

“You, Jarrood Schultz... You bastard.

.

Go away!”

If not for Nicole’s slurred speech, Jarrood might have believed she was entirely sober.

She pronounced his name with startling clarity.

“Only you...” Jarrod’s grip on her chin tightened, his voice cold and firm.

“Only you dare to speak to me like this.

”

Every woman who approached Jarrod typically did so with either flattery or fear.

Nicole, however, always seemed to challenge him.

Despite moments of clarity, Nicole was evidently not fully sober.

She stammered, “Go away.

.

Go.

.

Go.

.

””

Jarrod’s expression darkened with irritation.

“You want me to leave? Then you go find one of those male escorts to resolve your condition?”

Nicole nodded and shook her head erratically, her words and actions beyond her control.

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“Just not you.

.

Devil.

.

Bad man!”

Jarrood’s tone grew icy.

“If I were truly the bad man you claim, do you think you’d still be here?”

Those who crossed Jarrood tended to vanish, yet here Nicole was, boldly provoking him.

He had no patience for a futile argument with an incoherent woman outside the club.

“Get in the car!” Jarrood ordered sharply.

Nicole resisted, struggling against his hold.

Losing his patience, Jarrood hoisted her over his shoulder.

“Ah.

Let go of me... You bastard.

” Nicole’s attempts to fight off his grip were feeble, barely registering.


Silently, Jarrood placed her in the back seat of the car, following her in and securing her hands behind her back with his tie.

“Mmm.

.

”” Nicole’s protests resisted.





Jarrold instructed the driver with authority, "Drive.

"Text ©

"Mr.

Schultz, where to?" the driver inquired.

While it was common for men to take women to hotels, Jarrod had a different destination in mind.

Looking at Nicole, who continued to struggle, Jarrod pinched the bridge of his nose and commanded, "To the villa.

"

As the car started, Nicole kept shifting, her head knocking against the window.

Jarrold, catching her by the face, warned sharply, "Do you want to jump out? Think about what that would do to your face.

"

Realizing the implications, Nicole settled down somewhat.

Seeing her calm slightly, Jarrod disdainfully pushed her into the corner.

The mix of blood, alcohol, and vomit emanating from Nicole was repulsive.

Jarrold had intervened out of necessity alone.

As the car drove on, Nicole muttered a single word, barely audible, "Roscoe.

"

Jarrold's face set into a mask of icy severity, his expression darkening instantly.

The veins on the back of his hand stood out, signaling his intense effort to maintain control.

Jarrold half-turned, intent on ejecting Nicole from the car, but paused when he saw her curled up like a distressed cat in the corner, her demeanor unusually subdued.

It was a rare sight, her docility, especially since she wasn't fully conscious.

Jarrold grasped arguing with someone in such a state was futile.

"Damn it!" Jarrold muttered under his breath, his frustration evident as he yanked at his collar, accidentally popping a couple of buttons.

His shirt fell open slightly, revealing the chiseled contours of his chest, an unintentional display of raw masculine allure.

Thankfully, Nicole's outburst had been brief.

Had it persisted, Jarrold might have been tempted to remove her from the car before reaching their destination.

Reflecting on the evening, Jarrold questioned his decision to bring Nicole home.

Perhaps he should have maintained his usual role as an indifferent observer.

After all, she didn't need him.

She needed someone else.

.

The suburban property was one of many owned by Jarrold but held a special place as his personal retreat.

Jarrold valued its tranquility and the way it stood isolated, near the river.

During storms, he would sit on the large terrace, Listening to the rain lash against the river, the sounds reflecting the turbulence of his past.

Those moments reinforced his resilience, a testament to the adversities he had overcome.

There was no returning to the polished gentleman he once pretended to be, if he ever truly was one.

He never was.

As the car approached the villa, the staff, already informed by the driver, were prepared.

Both the doctor and the housekeeper were ready to assist.

As the car pulled up, they hurried out to meet Jarrod.

Seeing Jarrod half-dragging, half-carrying Nicole, the housekeeper stepped forward to help, but Nicole resisted, flinching away from both Jarrod and any other approaching hands.

Nicole's clouded mind kept her constantly alert around anyone, a behavior ingrained from a life filled with constant upheaval.

She resisted Jarrod, though his familiar scent provided a modicum of comfort compared to the strangers around her.

Jarrod observed her reluctance to interact with the staff and felt a slight uplift in his mood.

A faint smile appeared at the corner of his lips as he calmly said, "No need."
"

The housekeeper sensed Nicole was a special one to Jarrod when noting how Nicole clung to Jarrod, attempting to fend off anyone else's touch.



For one, no other woman had ever been brought to this villa by Jarrod.

Additionally, Jarrod was not known for his patience with women.

Yet, here he was, displaying an uncharacteristic tolerance.

Concluding that Nicole must hold some special significance to Jarrod, the housekeeper adjusted her approach to better accommodate Nicole.

Jarrod gently placed Nicole on the couch, and the doctor immediately began to assess her condition.

After a brief examination, he reported, “Mr.

Schultz, it appears she has ingested a mild hallucinogen, nothing highly toxic.

It should be manageable.

”

“Then manage it,” Jarrod responded tersely.

The doctor nodded.

“Well, it’s not a serious condition.

She could simply sleep it off with someone to ensure her safety and comfort.

”

The doctor, aware of Jarrod’s usual reluctance to bring women home, saw an opportunity to suggest a more personal care approach.

He was merely presenting the facts, leaving the decision up to Jarrod.

Indeed, the substance Nicole had consumed was likely a mild emotional enhancer, rather than a dangerous drug. Property © of

Jarrood inquired, "Are there any other alternatives?"

Clearly, Jarrood was not enthused by the doctor's suggestion.

The doctor hesitated, sensing he might have misjudged the situation.

But Jarrood's expression was telling.

It was that of a man considering his options for a woman in his care.

The doctor, understanding the subtext, offered an alternative.

"Or we could administer a sedative via injection.

How would you like to proceed?"

"Will there be any side effects?" Jarrood asked, his concern evident.

The doctor reassured him quickly, "No, not at all.

I'll use the mildest sedative we have.

"

With a thoughtful look at Nicole, Jarrood didn't deliberate long.

"Give her the injection," he decided.

The doctor nodded and retrieved the necessary tools from his medical kit.

Nicole, however, continued to resist, writhing despite her restrained wrists.

The housekeeper hesitated to apply too much force, wary of causing harm, and appeared rather helpless in the situation.

Finally, Jarrood took control, firmly holding Nicole down.

"Give her the injection," he instructed the doctor.

Once the sedative was administered, Nicole's demeanor softened significantly, becoming as docile as a timid deer.

Jarrood then directed the housekeeper to take Nicole for a bath while he went upstairs to cleanse himself.

In his room, Jarrod removed his soiled clothes and stepped into the shower, naked.

As the water washed over Jarrod, he felt a sharp sting on his lip.

Touching it, he remembered Nicole had bitten him during their intense ki*s.

The incident stirred thoughts he typically suppressed.

Chapter 2374



Jarrood was not devoid of desire, but he generally chose to control it.

The overt advances from women rarely interested him.

Often, they even repelled him.

Publicly, Jarrod acknowledged only Vicki, yet their relationship had not progressed beyond platonic interactions.

Vicki had made advances, but Jarrod had maintained his boundaries, clear about his disinterest in deepening their physical connection.

If they were to marry, Jarrod expected Vicki to embrace a celibate life.

She had already consented to not have children.

Imposing further would be unfair.

Thus, Jarrod had Alec subtly introduce the notion of a vasectomy as a litmus test for Vicki.

If she accepted, all would proceed.

If not, it would simplify his decisions.

Despite rumors, Jarrod knew his disinterest wasn't due to work stress but something more personal.

His desires only emerged in solitude, always fixated on one particular woman, Nicole.

Nicole's recent ki*s with Jarrod had unexpectedly reawakened his dormant longings.

Annoyed with himself, he turned on the cold water, hoping to quell the heat within.

Feeling somewhat composed after his cold shower, Jarrod donned a silk robe.

Leaving his hair damp, he exited his room.

He encountered the housekeeper in the hallway, carrying a hairdryer likely intended for Nicole.

Jarrod extended his hand, his voice low and firm.

"Give it to me.

"

In the room, Nicole lay on the bed.

Her damp hair, still wet from the bath, framed her face.

She wore a silk nightgown that the housekeeper had helped her into.

The neckline was slightly loose, threatening to reveal more with any small movement.

Jarrood approached with a hairdryer in hand and began to gently dry her hair. His movements were practiced and deft.

He had done this before.

A few years ago, he had dried Nicole's hair when she was more submissive, almost like a contented kitten on the bed.

That first time Jarrood dried a woman's hair was with Nicole, and since then, he hadn't done it for anyone else.

Now, as he repeated the gesture, his feelings had shifted.

Their relationship was beyond repair.

The warm air blew gently against her scalp.

Nicole felt the warmth and tingled slightly but did not wake up.

The bed, Jarrood's own, was spacious, a massive 2.

8 meters wide.

After a moment's hesitation, Jarrood climbed into bed and pulled the covers over himself.

The mattress dipped under his weight.

Jarrood had no intentions beyond sharing the bed, something he hadn't done with Nicole in a long time.

On a whim, he wanted to experience it again tonight.

The blanket carried the faint, alluring scent of Nicole.

Jarrood closed his eyes, deeply inhaling the unfamiliar fragrance, savoring it.

He thought the long-lost scent of Nicole's should have soothed him into sleep.

Instead, it sharpened his mind, awakening something primal within him.

Struggling to maintain control, Jarrod fought against the raw urges surfacing within his consciousness.

He exerted every effort to master himself.

But his body reacted quicker than his mind, driven by the proximity of her intoxicating presence.

The pale skin, the soft breathing, and the red marks, all fueled his imagination in ways he wished he could suppress.

Chapter 2375



Jarrold's breathing grew heavier as he edged closer to Nicole's seductive figure on the bed.

His broad hand slipped under the thin silk of the nightgown, pressing against her warm skin, kneading gently.

In the quiet room, the faint sounds of his rough breaths echoed.

This continued for a long time until a final, ragged breath escaped his lips.

Then, the trembling stopped.

Jarrold squinted and lay still for a moment.

He withdrew his hand, pulled a few tissues from the bedside table, and cleaned up nonchalantly.

Afterwards, he rose and headed to the bathroom for a cold shower.

Emerging from the bathroom, still bare, Jarrold glanced at the still-sleeping woman on the bed and sighed.

He decided against staying the night.

It would be too challenging.

With that, he opened the door and left the room.

On the bed, Nicole's sleep was restless.

Her brows were tightly furrowed, her legs curled up, a sign of deep-seated insecurity.

Nicole had been insecure for many years.

In the past, with her parents close by, she could sleep soundly even on the small, uncomfortable cot in a hospital room.

But since her father's passing, peaceful nights had been rare.

Tonight, she dreamt of her father again.

Her dream traced back to the time when she was a child, and he was taking her to the countryside for a charity event.

In her dream, Nicole found herself walking through endless farmland, her father explaining the

various crops and their uses.

He described how these plants would eventually end up on their table.

Tired from walking, little Nicole rode on her father's back. Property © of
Listening to his explanations, she innocently asked, "Daddy, why don't the farmers eat meat? It's filling and delicious.

Why don't they?"

Her father paused and then laughed heartily at her naive question.

Such innocence was typical for a child her age.

At five, little Nicole couldn't grasp the scarcity of meat and its value.

Growing up in the city with the affluent Lawrence family, Nicole had always been well-fed, even the household staff enjoyed hearty meals.

This made it difficult for little Nicole to understand why farmers lived differently.

Her father tailored his explanation to her young mind.

“Does my little Nicole like eating meat?”

“Yes, I like meat,” Little Nicole replied in her childlike tone.

Meat was delicious, fragrant, and tender, irresistible to anyone.

Her father continued, “The meat you enjoy, including beef, pork and lamb, comes from animals raised by those farmers.

Instead of eating them, the farmers sell them to support their families.

Many farmers haven’t had the opportunity for education, which limits their job options to physically demanding work.

It’s not that they dislike meat, but selling a pig or a sheep might cover their family’s annual expenses, including their children’s schooling.

They sacrifice their desires, hoping their hard work will offer their children a chance to break free from poverty.

”

Chapter 2376



“So, that’s why you help those who are stuck in poverty, right?”

Little Nicole’s voice was innocent yet perceptive.

Nicole's father was involved in helping many such families, including children raised by elderly grandparents who couldn't work themselves.

For those families, the absence of a working adult meant no income and no hope.

The children could starve without external aid, their futures confined to their impoverished villages.

Even at a young age, little Nicole grasped her father's lessons.

She declared, "Daddy, I won't eat cheesecake anymore.

Let's use that money to help those children.

"

Her father Laughed gently at her proposal.

He pinched her cheek, smiling warmly.

"Don't worry, Nicole.

You can still have your cheesecake.

Daddy makes sure our needs are met first before helping others.

"

For a five-year-old, the thought of giving up cheesecake was significant.

Nicole pouted.

"Then I'll eat a little less..."

Her father's laughter filled the air, warm and comforting.

The dream was sweet and comforting, filled with the love and warmth of her father.

Nicole was so content that she wished the dream would never end.

But then, the scene shifted abruptly.

Her beloved father was now covered in blood.

In Nicole's dream, the blood emanated from her father seemed to spread endlessly, engulfing everything in its path.

The sight of crimson terrified Nicole, and she screamed, awakening with bloodshot eyes.

Her head buzzed incessantly, making her dizzy.

She glanced around the unfamiliar room, her expression bewildered.

Nicole blinked, trying to recall the previous events.

Having predicted Vicki wouldn't let her off easily, she had installed a hidden camera in the chamber of the club.

Later, Jemma called Jarrod at the agreed time.

Then, Jarrod had taken her away.

Rubbing her throbbing head, Nicole still felt groggy.

There was an odd scent in the air, something elusive, yet...

Nicole was no naive girl.

This scent was strong and familiar.

She frowned.

Recalling she was drugged last night, Nicole hastily threw off the covers to check herself for any signs of s@xual intercourse.

Other than the bruises from being bullied by Vicki and her thugs, Nicole found her more private areas to be untouched, except for the deep finger marks on her waist.

These were too pronounced to overlook.

She couldn't imagine what could have caused such marks.

It didn't look like something from a fight.

She hesitated to contemplate further.

Noticing her clothes weren't her own, Nicole's concern deepened.

Just then, the door swung open.

Jarrood entered, noticing Nicole sitting up.

He offered a simple, "Awake?"

Right after he said so, an oversized pillow hurtled toward his face.

Chapter 2377



Jarrood raised his hand, deflecting the pillow, which then fell to the floor.

His expression remained calm, his gaze steady.

"Is this how you repay me for saving you?"

"What did you do to me?" Nicole demanded, her anger palpable.

Jarrood, observing her rage, allowed a small smile to touch his lips.

He picked up a glass of whiskey brought by the housekeeper, swirled it, took a sip, and said casually, "If I had done anything, don't you think you'd have felt it?"

Nicole was momentarily stunned.

Instantly, her ears turned red.

This man could discuss inappropriate topics with the same poise he brought to business meetings.

His expression stayed serious, yet his words were anything but.

Jarrood, unabashed, retorted, “If I had done something to you, you wouldn’t have the strength to throw a pillow at me this morning.

”

“You...” Nicole’s skin crawled with indignation.

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“And you might want to look in a mirror...” Jarrood continued, his tone feigning helpfulness.

He pointed to the mirrored wall opposite the bed, remarking, “The way you look now, even if you were out on the street, no one would bother you.

”

His words cut deep.

Nicole, seething with fury, glanced at her reflection in the mirrored wall.

Her face was swollen, resembling a pig’s head.

Not only her body but her forehead and jaw were also swollen.

Last night, her wounds were just bruises.

Now, her entire face had puffed up, distorting her features into a squashed, comical appearance, hardly unattractive but certainly less appealing.

But she wasn’t exactly ugly.

Her features were her own, unaltered and authentic.

Swollen, she appeared more comical than anything, a larger-than-life version of herself.

“And my clothes...” Nicole gestured to the nightgown she was wearing and asked, “Who changed them?”

“Not me,” Jarrod was quick to clarify, wanting to avoid any misunderstanding.

“The housekeeper did.

”

A wave of relief washed over Nicole, but she knew this was not the time for lengthy discussions with Jarrod.

More urgent matters demanded her attention. This content © 2024

Last night, Nicole had arranged for Jemma to call Jarrod if she failed to emerge by the agreed time, trusting that only Jarrod could outmaneuver Vicki.

This was her strategy to protect Austin.

She couldn't afford any errors.

Otherwise, she wouldn't have involved Jarrod.

Before the incident, Nicole had instructed Jemma to secure the hidden camera footage from the chamber in due time.

With the evidence of Vicki's bullies, unfit for a stepmother for Austin, now likely in Jemma's possession, she needed to retrieve it swiftly to Leverage negotiations with Jarrod.

Nicole was convinced that once Jarrod viewed the footage, he would not risk the Schultz family's reputation by marrying Vicki.

Even if he decided to proceed, he would have to concede to her terms.

After a moment of thought, Nicole said, “I need to leave.

Get me my clothes.

” The nightgown was far too loose, and wearing it outside would be humiliating.

Jarrood raised an eyebrow.

“Your clothes? Those torn rags?”

Nicole realized he was right.

Her clothes were indeed shredded.

“Then please, find me something I can wear.

”

“Why should I find you something to wear?” Jarrood scoffed.

“If you want to leave, go ahead just as you are.

”

Nicole bristled at his words.

She threw off the covers, prepared to leave in the nightgown.

Chapter 2378



“Do you really plan to go out like this?” Jarrood’s eyes were cold and sharp.

“What are you so eager to do?”

Nicole’s heart sank, sensing his suspicion in his words.

She straightened her back and declared, “There’s nothing I need to do, Mr. Schultz.

This is your home, and since you and Miss Hampton are about to get married, it's inappropriate for me to stay here.

”

“Inappropriate?” Jarrod swirled the whiskey in his glass and sneered, “When you ki*sed me last night, you didn't seem to think it was inappropriate.

Now you find staying here for a while is inappropriate, Miss Lawrence?”

He stressed “Miss Lawrence” with a slow, mocking tone, mirroring her earlier formality when she had referred to him as “Mr.

Schultz.

” If she wanted to play the part of strangers, he was willing to play along.

Nicole's cheeks flushed slightly.

She didn't recall much from the night before, but Jarrod's words stirred faint memories.

At that moment, she fully grasped getting drunk wasn't the scary part but the aftermath.

Despite having been forced to consume the doctored drink, she couldn't deny her actions.

Nicole's voice softened.

“I apologize for my behavior while I was not somber.

”

“No need for apologies,” Jarrod replied coldly.

“I don't accept them because I don't offer second chances.

” His tone was unyielding.

Realizing he was intentionally complicating matters, Nicole looked up.

“Then what do you want?”

Jarrood responded not with words, but by pulling out a small camcorder and tossing it onto the bed.

Nicole’s expression shifted dramatically.

It was her camera set up in the chamber.

How did Jarrod get it? Had Jemma handed it over to him?

Nicole quickly dismissed the thought.

She refused to suspect Jemma, despite their brief acquaintance.

For some reason, she just didn’t think Jemma would betray her.

If Jemma had wanted to harm her, she had plenty of earlier opportunities.

There was no reason to wait until now.

So it must have been something that Jarrod had come up with himself.

Nicole was surprised at Jarrod’s perceptiveness.

He had accurately predicted that she would use the mini camera to record Doreen’s and Vicki’s bullies against her.

Nicole reached for the camera, but before her fingers could touch it, she was stopped by his taunting voice.

“It’s already useless.

”

Looking over, Nicole noticed the storage card was missing.

Clearly, Jarrod had no intention of returning it after viewing its contents.

After all, the evil-doers captured by the camera were his cousin, his fiancée, and his future brother-in-law, people deeply connected to him.

He wouldn't let them face any repercussions.

Facing Jarrod, Nicole said, "Since you've removed the storage card, I take it you've seen everything on it.

"

"Yes, I have," Jarrod admitted openly.

"Did you hear what your fiancée had said?" Nicole, noticeably emotional, pressed him for an answer.

"Are you certain she's the right choice to be Austin's stepmother?"

Actually, Jarrod had been firm in his decision after viewing the recording.

But just then, Nicole's murmured words from the previous night echoed in his mind.

Even in her unconscious state, she murmured Roscoe's name.

Jarrod then recalled Nicole's indifference to him, scheming against him relentlessly, her determination to bring him down evident.

Thus, when it was time to speak, Jarrod changed his words.

His voice was cool and detached as he replied, "It doesn't have to be her.

Any woman can fill the role of stepmother for Austin.

Since no one will love him as their own, I might as well choose someone who benefits me the most.

"

It was a cruel statement to make.

What kind of father would consider using his child merely as a tool for personal gain?

Nicole's anger flared, and she snapped, "Jarrod, have you lost your mind?"



When Jarrod noticed that she was no longer detached and subdued, his lips formed a subtle smile.

“I’m not insane.

And does it surprise you that I think this way?”

Lifting his chin with a trace of self-derision, Jarrod asked, “Don’t you always see me in this regard?”

Nicole’s hands were balled into fists, and she yelled, “Yes, to me, you’re a monster! But...”

She paused briefly and then added, “To Austin, you are his father.

”

Jarrod’s heart jolted at her words.

He was aware that he might not excel as a father, but with Austin in his life, he felt compelled to embrace the responsibilities of being a father.

Even if he struggled, he was earnest in his attempts.

Nicole continued, “Given all this, would you really hand Austin over to that malicious woman?”

Of course, Jarrod wouldn’t.

However, he kept his thoughts to himself.

His expression darkened.

“That’s none of your concern.

”

Nicole chuckled.

“Indeed.

It’s really none of my business.

Mr.

Schultz, you’re trying to look out for your cousin, your fiancée, and your future brother-in-law, aren’t you? That’s on you.

But whether or not you can actually keep them safe... Well, we’ll just have to see, won’t we?”

Jarrood raised an eyebrow.

“What exactly are you implying?”

“I have the backup of the storage card.

Did that thought ever cross your mind?” Nicole’s smile was enigmatic, adding a layer of intrigue.

Jarrood was caught off guard.

He hadn’t considered Nicole capable of having a backup simultaneously.

With the advanced technology, it was certainly feasible.

For a brief moment, he

was unsure whether she was bluffing.

He watched her face intently, searching for any tell.

Nicole maintained her composure, her voice steady.

“You seem unconcerned with Austin’s safety.

As his mother, it falls to me to take action.

Tomorrow, I'll expose the real faces of everyone in your precious circle to the public.

”

Her tone was resolute, convincing Jarrod that she might indeed possess a backup.

His expression turned grave.

He pressed, “And then?”

Nicole hesitated.

She was at a loss, not quite grasping his point.

Jarrod explained, “Once this is out in the open, Doreen won't have to shoulder the blame.

My sister will cover for her.

At worst, Doreen might need to spend some time abroad to let things settle, but her prospects won't be tarnished at all.

As for Vicki and Lowe, backed by the Hamptons, I doubt you could cause them any real trouble.

And suppose you do manage to get this scandal trending through money or connections, what then?”

Jarrod set his wine glass down, his face a mask of detached calm.

“Their situations are similar to Doreen's.

None of this will touch them.

”

His tone grew icy.

“Nicole, don't be so naive.

I might choose not to marry Vicki, but that doesn't stop me from marrying someone else.

Should I then screen whether they're suitable for Austin?"

Nicole had never considered Jarrod's perspective.

Yet, it did have a point.

The video in her possession might stop Vicki from becoming Jarrod's wife.

But what about other women who would become Jarrod's fiancée? How could she judge if they were fit or unfit?

As long as Jarrod held onto Austin's custody, these looming threats would remain inevitable.

For a moment, Nicole was bewildered, staring into Jarrod's profound eyes, puzzled by his thoughts.

She inquired pointedly, "What do you want from me to secure Austin's custody?"

Nicole would only be at ease when Austin was in her care.

She had amassed just enough wealth for Austin that, while not lavish, was significantly better than the average, providing a stable foundation.

With Nicole's money, Austin was free to pursue his passions.

Should he take an interest in business, the trust fund could serve as his initial investment, potentially launching him into success under his management.



Nicole was determined to look after Austin until he reached adulthood, regardless of her own health challenges.

If necessary, she would appoint a trustworthy guardian to ensure his well-being until then.

Although Jarrod was wealthy, his principles and the inherent risks associated with his lifestyle did not promise a secure environment for Austin.

As a mother, she could not stand by and watch her child be exposed to such hazards.

Thus, Nicole reiterated, "I'm insisting on taking custody of Austin.

His staying with you does him no good.

"

Jarrod's face remained impassive, his inner turmoil masked by a serene exterior.

He had watched the recording, stunned by Vicki's and Doreen's merciless attack on Nicole.

He was well aware that Nicole's endurance was for Austin's sake.

Yet, the easiest solution was within reach for Nicole.

Just turning to him for help would do.

She simply refused to consider it.

Could he be that bad in her eyes?

Regaining his calm, Jarrod responded indifferently, "Are you certain you want to fight for custody of Austin?"

Nicole held her breath, fully aware of the gravity of her decision.

In all honesty, she wanted to Austin's custody because this was the only way she could ensure that Austin would be safe and sound.

Given Austin's frail condition, he was vulnerable to even minor harm. This was the primary reason Nicole had gone to great lengths to prevent Vicki from marrying Jarrod.

Although Austin's recovery was slow, the doctor had recently assured Nicole that his condition had markedly improved, and the planned donation should proceed without issue.

Because of these developments, Nicole knew she must take Austin back to her side to ensure everything went smoothly.

Failure was not an option, as it would leave her with lifelong regret.

"of course..." Nicole began to speak.

However, she was interrupted as Jarrod gently placed his finger on her lips and whispered, "Shh.

"

The slight roughness of his fingertip sent a shock through Nicole.

She felt her skin crawl and instinctively stepped back.

Instead of retreating, Jarrod stepped forward, smiling slightly.

"Nicole, if you truly want this, you need to prove your sincerity.

"

Startled, Nicole quickly took another step back and asked, "What do you want?"

Before she could regain her footing, his hot breath was on her.

Jarrood pressed Nicole against the wardrobe and delivered a fierce ki*s to her swollen lips, as if testing her.

He then deepened the ki*s, biting her Lips forcefully.

Jarrood's aroma of alcohol froze Nicole for a moment, and then she reacted by pushing him back.

To her dismay, Jarrood bent his knees, trapping her legs, and ki*sed her forcefully.

He held the back of her head and continued the brutal ki*s, biting her intensely.

Nicole tried to escape his aggressive advances, but against his nearly six-foot frame, her efforts seemed futile.