

## Unbreakable 2331

### Chapter 2331

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The woman in red responded cautiously, Sir, our only option is to administer a parasite that will awaken him, but it will severely damage his body. This parasite targets the brain, and its probable that your son will

She trailed off, leaving the grim implication hanging in the air. It was clear to all. Roscoes chances of survival were slim.

Miguels concerns were elsewhere, focused solely on his personal interests, He still possessed assets he hadnt yet transferred abroad and needed Roscoe, the heir he claimed to pass over the control of the Watts family, to shoulder all the blame for the wrongdoings the other members of the Watts family had done. Thus, Roscoes survival was crucial, but only for now.

If Roscoe were to die right now, Miguels elaborate scheme would be shattered apart, potentially dragging the Schultz family down. Jarrod, unaware of Miguels true motives, would otherwise never agree to Doreen marrying Roscoe despite her affection.

Jarrod, by pressing the Watts and Schultz families into a union through marriage, had unwittingly played into Miguels hands.

Miguels machinations were indeed cunning.

After pondering briefly, Miguel decisively instructed, Do it. Revive him now. I need this wedding to continue flawlessly.

This action would signal to the community that the Watts family remained robust and stable, ensuring the smooth operation of his covert investment endeavors and securing long-term safety for his other heirs overseas. This way, the Watts lineage was poised for enduring prosperity.

The woman in reds expression turned to one of reluctance. Sir, the risk increases with each use of the parasite. If he suffers another seizure, he may not make it

Miguel responded with visible irritation, Ive invested heavily in your witchcraft tribe for this task. Spare me the excuses. You are to follow my orders, understood?

The woman in red pondered for a while and noted he was right. Miguel was their employer, not Roscoe. They would have to comply with whatever Miguel demanded, even if it meant harming Roscoe.

The witchcraft tribe specialized in using parasites for such mental control that even the precise machine might not detect anything amiss.

Should Roscoe now be examined at a hospital, no signs would be apparent until the parasites had devoured his brain.

Once satiated, the parasites would exit the hosts brain either to find another host or to return to their origin.

The woman in red retrieved a small sandalwood box from her belongings.

The elderly man immediately grasped what was about to occur upon seeing the box and began to vehemently rebuke her. He was adamant that his disciples not engage in harming others with the use of parasites.

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The woman in red had only told the elderly man, her master, about Miguels request for mental control of Roscoe, with a hefty sum of money as a reward that was sufficient enough to preserve the base of their tribal, a sacred site soon to be demolished.

Losing that site would mean the loss of a crucial breeding ground for the parasites and potentially the end of their tribe without any heirs.

Every one of their tribe nurtured the parasites from infancy within their own bodies, serving as the first hosts. Over time, the parasites matured into movable entities and they would coax the parasites out using a specific herb upon reaching maturity.

These parasites were then gathered at the worlds clearest lake, nourished by mist and dew until they reached a viable size, after which they were stored in sandalwood boxes for further use.

The parasites cradled in the hand of the woman in red were aged forty years and possessed an unimaginable toxicity.

Despite the elderly mans efforts to stop inflicting harm on Roscoe, guards, under Miguels orders, forcibly removed him.

Miguel, observing the woman in reds hesitation, stroked his beard, his face twisting into a sly grin. Emerie, remember our initial agreement that neither party could renege? Otherwise, you and your master might not safely exit Ardlens.

Miguels threat was clear.

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Turning to the pale-faced Roscoe on the bed, the woman in red lowered her head and murmured, Im sorry. Your family wants you gone, and Im left with no choice.

She shaped her hand like a canopy, and from the box, a white worm emerged, crawling onto her hand. She gently placed her hand over Roscoes eyes, and within seconds, she removed it to reveal the parasite had vanished.

Miguel expressed his doubt, Did the parasite truly enter like that?

The woman in red, head still bowed, explained, Parasites enter the brain only through the eyes, morphing to match the shape of the eyeball, as thin as paper. Once inside, they mimic nerves, undetectable by X-rays or standard instruments.

Miguel remained skeptical until Roscoe stirred, flexing his fingers before opening his eyes, now clear and alert. He asked, How did I get here?

Emerie said, Sir, today is your wedding day. You were merely resting backstage, but now its time to return to the ceremony.

Roscoe acknowledged with a simple nod and got out of bed, his demeanor energetic and healthy.

Miguel couldnt contain his delight, acknowledging the mental controlling skills the witchcraft tribe possessed, his invested money worthwhile. With their support, he assumed there was nothing he couldnt conquer.

Emerie trailed behind Roscoe as they made their way to the wedding stage. Though Roscoe seemed fine, he needed close observation, a task only Emerie could manage.

Onstage, the host repeated the crucial question after Doreen was informed of the grooms revival. Roscoe responded robustly, I do.

Doreen, glowing with happiness, echoed, I do too.

The host then proclaimed the union official amid the crowds applause and cheers.

Behind the scenes, Miguels dark gaze shifted to the butler, his voice carrying a hint of urgency. Where is that woman?

The butler announced, Miss Lawrence is confined to the lounge.

Miguel, coldly stroking his beard, commanded, Beat her thoroughly, and then throw her out.

Miguel internally cursed Nicole. Were it not for the unique and valuable parasite, he would relish the chance to watch it consume her mind. She was a complete disaster, utterly irritating. Fortunately, rumors

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suggested her health was failing. This ordeal would ideally see her and Roscoe perish together in their misery.

Miguel departed with a wave of his hand.

Trapped in the lounge, Nicole was left to consider Roscoes odd demeanor. It was unsettling, not resembling amnesia, but rather as if he had been stripped of his soul, leaving him devoid of any vitality.

What could be happening?

As she pondered, the door burst open. Two menacing bodyguards, clad in black and armed with wooden sticks, entered.

Nicoles heart skipped a beat, and she recoiled. What are you planning to do? she asked, her voice shaking.

The orders are to beat you, one bodyguard stated flatly.

Youre committing a crime! Nicole yelled in response.

The intent to inflict severe harm was evident in their menacing stance with the sticks. Miguels malice was clear.

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Were here to punish the thief who disrupted the banquet and committed theft, the other bodyguard explained. A fortune in gold and silver jewelry vanished today at the event, and youre our prime suspect.

As the words hung in the air, the bodyguard threw a heap of jewelry onto the floor before Nicole. Miguels scheme to kill Nicole was meticulously planned, leaving no loopholes.

Nicole stared in disbelief at the scattered gold and silver before her. It wasnt me! I didnt steal anything! Youre framing me! she exclaimed.

The bodyguards advanced step by step. We have witnesses and evidence proving it was you. Do you still deny it? they challenged.

Programmed with Miguels instructions, the bodyguards were merely executing their orders. By accusing Nicole, they justified their actions to commence the beating without fear of reprisal.

Cornered against a cold wall with nowhere to hide, Nicole watched the burly men raise their sticks.

Realizing the futility of pleading with Miguels men, loyal enforcers of the Watts family, Nicole braced for the inevitable. She shut her eyes tight, anticipating the devastating strike.

Bang! A loud crash echoed, yet no pain followed.

Instead, Nicole found herself enveloped in a sturdy, protective embrace.

Another stick swung down, but the person shielding her dodged, smashing it against the wall and shattering the wood.

The potential lethality of the blow was unmistakable. It could have been fatal.

Before Nicole could process the shock, darkness clouded her vision, and a pungent, bloody odor filled her nostrils, the scent drenching her hand.

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Another strike was aimed at her, but a figure burst in, deflecting it. The stick clattered to the ground.

The newcomer, far from courteous, unleashed a flurry of kicks and punches on the bodyguards, swiftly overpowering them.

Even after the two bodyguards were down, the newcomer continued his assault relentlessly. Damn it! Are your eyes blind? How dare you hit Mr. Schultz? Ill teach you both a lesson you wont forget for your entire lifetime! he bellowed.

It was none other than Alec.

In the chaos, the bloodied man, having previously shielded Nicole from the impact, collapsed with a heavy thud.

Sir! Alec rushed over to support.

Jarrold looked miserable, his white shirt soaked with blood. He had been recovering from a car accident that had only recently stopped bleeding. Now, his wound had reopened due to the blow he took to protect Nicole, causing him to bleed profusely once more. His Lips were pale, and he appeared extremely weak.

Nicole, still in shock, was baffled about where Jarrold had come from.

Moments before, she had braced for the impact of the stick, but Jarrold had intervened, taking the blow for her.

Alec shot an angry glance at Nicole. Its all your fault! Youre a jinx! he accused. He stooped to lift Jarrold, who had fainted. Yet, he alone couldnt possibly hoist Jarrold onto his back.

Alec looked at Nicole with fury. Help me! Dont you have any conscience? Jarrold has saved you countless times, and you dont even care!

Stunned, Nicole quickly moved to assist in supporting Jarrold.

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Meanwhile, Miguel arrived on the scene, feigning surprise. What How did this happen? he exclaimed.

Sir, theres no need to pretend with me! Alec retorted sharply.

Miguel, trying to maintain his composure, responded coldly, Alec, what do you mean? I dont understand!

Alec scoffed. Interesting! Mr. Schultz explicitly instructed me to relay the message that Miss Lawrence is not to be touched. Whats the meaning of this attack? This thick stick was intended to kill her, wasnt it?

Miguel feigned confusion. Alec, youre accusing me wrongly. I simply ordered that the thief caught at the banquet be punished according to our rules. Who would have guessed that the thief was Miss Lawrence? Why would Miss Lawrence steal anything?

Disgusted by Miguels charade, Alec spat on the ground. Save it! Dont pretend you dont recognize Miss Lawrence. If you dont know her, then no one in the Watts family does? He questioned, his tone full of scorn.

Alec was livid. Jarrods condition was dire and his previous injuries were exacerbated by this fresh assault. Courtesy was the last thing on anyones mind now. Miguel was indeed despicable! Miguel must be around since this was Roscoes wedding. He failed to recognize Nicole?

What nonsense!

Alec had enough of dealing with Miguel. This old scoundrel was merely spinning his tales, wasting time, and Alec couldnt afford to delay Jarrods medical attention any longer. His back was drenched in Jarrods blood, and no delay could be afforded.

Alec hoisted Jarrod and made for the exit. Earlier, Jarrod had rammed his car through the gate, badly damaging the front. It was a costly vehicle, now in ruins.

Two bodyguards swung the doors open as Alec laid Jarrod across the back seat, preparing to rush to the hospital.

Once inside the car, Alec sensed something amiss. Nicole hadnt followed! He initially thought she was being callous again, indifferent to Jarrods grave condition.

Just as Alec was about to reprimand her, he noticed the Watts familys bodyguards were preventing her from leaving.

Turning toward Miguel, Alec demanded, Whats the meaning of this?

Miguel maintained composure, his hand leisurely tracing his beard as he addressed Alec, Alec, the accusation against Miss Lawrence regarding the theft of my familys heirloom remains ambiguous. She is to remain under observation for the time being.

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Mr. Watts, have you considered the repercussions? Alecs countenance was icy, exuding an air reminiscent of Jarrods authoritative presence, commanding attention.

Miguel harbored a tinge of fear within, yet outwardly projected a facade of calm. In his eyes, Alec was merely perceived as a subordinate and didnt count for anything! Without the role as Jarrods assistant, Alec wouldnt merit so much as a glance from him.

He would have promptly dismissed Alec long ago.

Alec chuckled icily and retorted, Mr. Watts, I am an average individual, unable to discern your current intentions. However, my employer possesses courage, ingenuity, and sagacity. Do you truly believe your facade will deceive him? What are the odds?

Alecs words jolted Miguel into awareness.

Miguel found himself drenched in cold sweat at this remark. Far from a fool, Jarrod possessed remarkable intelligence and astuteness. Plus, Jarrod was adept at employing underhanded tactics!

Knowing he couldnt take action against Nicole today, Miguel attempted to diffuse the tension. Alec, youve misconstrued the situation. I detained Miss Lawrence with noble intentions.

Miguel chuckled awkwardly, his eye creases sharp as knives. I aim to conduct a thorough investigation to exonerate Miss Lawrence. Its unjust for her to bear the stigma of a criminal record for such a significant incident, isnt it?

Miguel possessed a silver tongue, his words carrying a persuasive charm. With years of experience in the field, he navigated such scenarios with ease.

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Though Alec saw through Miguels facade, he was powerless to intervene. He had sensed Miguels ulterior motives but remained uncertain of their nature. Vigilance was imperative.

Alec scoffed. Mr. Watts, save your words for Mr. Schultz when he regains consciousness. Dont presume that you wield unchecked authority and can do whatever you want merely because your son married someone from the Schultz family! Your understanding of Mr. Schultz seems sorely lacking!

Upon hearing Alecs brazen words, Miguels complexion drained of color, boiling rage simmering within him. To be addressed in such a manner by a mere subordinate Like Alec! Was this the respect he garnered? Alec failed to take him seriously!

Miguel vowed to make Alec regret his insolence sooner rather than later!

Meanwhile, Nicole remained rooted to the spot, her expression a mix of bewilderment and distress. Alec shot her a fierce glare, his patience waning. What are you lingering for? Do you intend to wait until Mr. Schultz succumbs to his injuries?

Alec harbored no desire to rescue Nicole. She had caused Jarrod considerable anguish!

Despite Jarrods insistence that he harbored no feelings for Nicole, the mere notion of her peril compelled him to act.

Alec found himself at a loss for words. Men who were hopeless romantics proved more daunting than women engulfed in love. Jarrod would risk his life to safeguard Nicole, yet shed offer no gratitude in return, Understanding Jarrods intentions eluded Alec completely. Nevertheless, he was duty-bound to carry out Jarrods directives, despite his reluctance. Jarrods impulsive tendencies when saving Nicole struck fear into him.

Alec grasped preserving Nicoles safety was non-negotiable. Otherwise, hed struggle to justify his actions to Jarrod.

Approaching Nicole, Alec seized her arm, guiding her toward the awaiting car.

Miguels unpredictability necessitated Alecs vigilance over Nicole.

Nicole sensed Miguels murderous intent, likely due to her actions jeopardizing his plans. In such a scenario, Roscoe was faced with an even greater threat. However, remaining here would only subject her to others control, rendering her unable to fight against the Watts family. Departure seemed the prudent choice, affording her the opportunity for careful deliberation.

Therefore, Nicole trailed behind Alec, entering the car.

On the way, the onboard doctor commenced treatment of Jarrods wounds.

Jarrods noncompliance necessitated Alecs vigilant supervision to ensure proper medical attention.

Though the bleeding had been temporarily halted, Jarrods blood-stained shirt still hinted at his perilous condition.

Alec muttered curses under his breath, fixing a piercing gaze on Nicole. Throughout the journey, his glare pierced her repeatedly. He yearned to speak out, yet the words remained lodged in his throat.

Upon arrival at the hospital, the doctor swiftly ushered Jarrod in for urgent treatment.

The doctor recoiled in shock at the extent of Jarrods injuries, entertaining suspicions of him being a potential terrorist and contemplating involving the authorities.

Alec swiftly intervened, elucidating the circumstances and presenting evidence from hospital records in the mountain district, alongside newspaper clippings.

Gradually convinced, the doctor commenced treatment on Jarrod.

Alec exhaled deeply, relieved. He then instructed the doctor to examine Nicole, but she declined.

I dont require it. Im departing, Nicole asserted.

Where are you going? Alec retorted scornfully. Back to the Watts family mansion to meet your demise?

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Alec seethed with frustration. Damn it, I shouldnt have intervened! Now that Jarrod is unconscious, if you fall into Miguels trap again, hell surely end you!

Nicole met his gaze squarely. Thank you for earlier. As for my fate, its none of your concern.

Alec was left dumbfounded. This woman

Nicole persisted, When Jarrod awakens, relay to him that gratitude wont be forthcoming for his deeds. The past remains indelible, and my animosity wont dissipate.

With that declaration, Nicole departed without a backward glance.

Alec was shocked, murmuring to himself, Shes utterly heartless and unyielding!

Fuming with frustration, Alec found himself helpless to act. After all, Jarrod was an incurable romantic, his heart fixating on Nicole.

Alec thudded his head against the wall thrice in an attempt to quell his agitation. He cautioned himself against succumbing to love, lest he become akin to Jarrod, susceptible to vulnerability.

Despite Jarrods reluctance to admit it, Alec could tell the truth staring Jarrod in the face that Jarrod fell in love with Nicole hopelessly!



After departing from the hospital, Nicole chose to return directly home, foregoing any other destinations. She cared little for anything else, surrendering herself to sleep without reservation.

She needed to devise a plan to rescue Roscoe without plunging recklessly into danger. It was evident that Miguel aimed to eliminate anyone hindering his agenda.

Roscoes unwavering support over the years was invaluable and unforgettable for Nicole. Those memories ran deep. Without Roscoes assistance, she might have perished long ago, and Austin might never have existed.

Yet, living as a human being entailed confronting not just Lifes challenges but also the emotional scars that proved stubborn to erase.

That sudden heartache.

Fortunately, there was a steadfast and emotionally stable man like Roscoe who had been by Nicoles side throughout it all. With his support, she found the strength to persevere, living one year after another.

She willed herself to drift into sleep, pushing aside all thoughts.

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Surely, she would find a solution! There must be a way!

Jarrood opened his eyes to a new day but remained confined to his bed, his complexion ashen from blood loss, and his lips turned pale.

Alec entered and noticed Jarrod gazing vacantly at the door. This was uncommon. Jarrod was usually attentive.

A twinge of sadness struck Alec. Eager not to let Jarrod down, he awkwardly shared, Miss Lawrence was here at the hospital yesterday. She left after the doctor assured her you were stable. She seemed exhausted, probably went home to sleep.

Alecs words were crafted half-truths. He spoke the truth but rearranged the sequence. His intention was simple, to lift Jarrods spirits, as Jarrods somber mood was unsettling.

Alec continued, Sir, Miss Lawrence appreciates you for saving her. Back on that mountain road, she really struggled to pull you up. I dont think she despises you that much.

Thats enough. Get out.

Jarrood preferred solitude. He wasnt easily fooled. He understood Nicoles feelings toward him all too well. No matter how many times he rescued her, it seemed unlikely to change her heart. She loathed him, perhaps enough to wish him ill.

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Jarrood knew that even during that incident on the mountain road, had Nicole recognized him, she might have hesitated. Not that she would harm him, but her resolve would waver. Her heart was

likely torn between her resentment and reluctance to leave someone behind who had saved her and others. Should she rescue him, she would loathe herself.

Should she leave him, she would feel remorse. Either decision would weigh heavily on her.

Jarrold was at a loss about how things had gotten so complicated. He knew Nicole would probably never forgive him, yet he couldn't release his hold on her. Their situation was fraught with tension. Perhaps it was time for a decision.

Lost in thought, Jarrold was interrupted once more by Alec. Sir, Miss Hampton has arrived.

Jarrold grimaced and said sternly, Tell her to leave.

Alec scratched his head and replied, Miss Hampton brought Austin to see you.

What? Jarrold's face hardened. A moment later, he commanded, Let them in!

Alright, Alec said and went out.

When Vicki entered, she was holding Austin's hand. She appeared oblivious to Jarrold's stern look, greeting him with a warm smile.

Jarrold, how are you feeling? Alec mentioned you were unwell, so Austin insisted on visiting you.

Jarrold initially wanted to reprimand Vicki for bringing Austin to the hospital, given Austin's fragile health. He had been tirelessly searching for a compatible organ donor for Austin, but success eluded him. Despite his efforts, finding a match proved challenging.

However, catching Austin's innocent face, Jarrold held back his critical words.

Austin, how have you been feeling lately? Any discomfort or unease?

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Jarrold asked.

Austin gently shook his head and said, No.

Alright. Given Austin's reserved nature, Jarrold found himself at a loss for words after this inquiry.

At that moment, Vicki knelt down and softly addressed Austin, Austin, you said you had something you wanted to say, remember?

Jarrold's brow furrowed.

Knowing Austin's shyness and reluctance to engage with others, Jarrold was concerned that Vicki's guidance might overwhelm Austin. Just as he was about to intervene, Austin began to speak.

Are you feeling any better? Austin's voice was quiet and slightly nervous.

Austin paused, then seemed to muster bravery, reopening his mouth, and said, Dad

The room fell into an immediate hush as if the softest sound echoed like a clap of thunder.

What did you just say? Jarrold was in disbelief and kept his voice low. Austin, could you repeat that?

The intensity of Jarrods reaction frightened Austin, causing him to retreat behind Vicki, too scared to speak.

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Vicki knelt and softly said, Austin, can you tell your daddy again what you just said, please?

Austin glanced at Vicki, then at Jarrod, pursed his lips, and repeated, Are you feeling better, dad? This time, his voice was stronger and more confident.

Jarrod sat up abruptly, aggravating his wound and wincing from the pain, yet he endured it desperately. He stroked Austins head, his voice shaking as he said, Im okay, Austin. Daddys okay.

That gentle pat on the head was Jarrods deepest expression of affection. He remembered how his own father patted him on the head as a sign of encouragement and approval.

After his parents died, Jarrod shut himself away. He turned into someone relentless in his pursuits, driven by bitterness and devoid of any family sentiment, until this moment, when the single word Dad struck a profound chord within him. It felt like it cleansed the guilt that had been weighing on him.

His eyes reddened, and Jarrod managed a weak cough, saying, Vicki, this isnt a place for children. Please take Austin home.

Okay, Jarrod, take care. Ive brought some soup for you, Vicki replied, pointing at a thermos on the table. She smiled. Its beneficial for your recovery. Its hearty but not too rich, and Austin really enjoys it.

As Vicki leaned over to Austin, she smiled and said, Tell your daddy, do you want him to try it?

Austin nodded and said, Dad, you should try it. Vicki spent a lot of time on it, and I really like it.

A softness appeared in Jarrods gaze as he looked at Vicki. Thank you for the effort. Ill have some.

Vickis smile widened. Its no trouble. Im happiest when Im cooking and preparing meals for Austin. Luckily, he enjoys it and always compliments the food.

Jarrods gaze deepened further. He noticed Austin sporting a slight smile, clearly in a cheerful mood. It was evident that Vicki excelled at childcare.

Vicki crouched again and spoke to Austin. Austin, say goodbye to your daddy so he can rest. We need to let him take good care of himself, alright?

Austin agreed and said, Dad, please take care of yourself and rest well. Can you teach me chess when youre feeling better?

A smile spread across Jarrods face as he responded, Of course. Daddy will come back and teach you.

After Vicki and Austin left hand in hand, Alec expressed his admiration, Sir, Miss Hampton has a real knack for guiding kids. How did she transform a timid boy into such a courteous and sweet young boy?

When Austin was first brought back by Jarrod, he was as prickly as a hedgehog, letting no one near except his manny. He looked at everyone with distrust in his eyes.

The shift in Austins demeanor was so remarkable that it would astonish anyone who witnessed it.

Jarrold observed Austin intently but remained silent.

Alec then updated Jarrod on everything Vicki had done at the villa.

Since the nanny who usually cared for Austin, arranged by Nicole, had fallen ill and was still recuperating, Vicki volunteered to look after Austin and thereafter took care of him daily until late. Over time, they seemed to get close.

Two additional nannies were specifically arranged for Austins care by Jarrod, rendering concerns of Vicki mistreating Austin pointless.

I can tell that Miss Hampton is quite adept at getting on with kids. The counselor was pleased with Austins progress following his therapy sessions, Alec commented.

Jarrold cast his eyes down, examining the text messages Vicki had sent him in the last few days. She hadnt sent many, just two each day, inquiring if he was looking after himself. Instead of asking about his whereabouts, she shared photos of Austin, showing Austin playing with clay, reading books, engaging in crafts, and eating meals It seemed she had invested a great deal of effort.

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After a brief reflection, Jarrod sent Vicki a message.

On the other side.

In the car, the sweet demeanor Austin had earlier was gone, replaced by a withdrawn and cold look as he faced Vicki. He appeared slightly scared and uncomfortable. You had promised me that if Im behaving, I will get to see my mommy, right?

Vicki now wore a cold, detached expression, her previous gentle facade gone. She responded in a stern tone, Austin, you need to try harder. The chance to see your mommy depends on making your father truly happy.

Austin was somewhat deflected. He was naturally introverted and had already stretched his social skills to the max for the earlier performance in Jarrods presence. Yet, he kept pushing himself, driven by Vickis assurance that if he could make Jarrod happy, he would get to see his mother.

But adults often masked their feelings well. It was hard for Austin to judge Jarrods mood. He was too young to grasp the complexities of Jarrods feelings.

Actually, Jarrod was quite pleased just then, compared with his usual self.

Austin bowed his head, anxiously fidgeting with his fingers. He desperately wanted to see his mother.

Suddenly, Vicki's phone beeped with a message from Jarrod. It was concise and clear. Get prepared for the wedding.

No shit! Vicki erupted into laughter, tears of joy welling in her eyes. She knew it! She had bet on the right horse! Jarrod did care about Austin and making him believe she treated Austin tenderly had made a difference.

Vicki's face softened significantly. She bent down to Austin and whispered, Your father said you did well earlier. Just a bit more effort and you'll get to see your mommy.

Austin's eyes widened in hopeful surprise. Really?

Absolutely. Not only will you see your mother, but you'll also get to live happily with her, Vicki said, her eyes flashing with malice.

She vowed to deal with Nicole and Austin once she achieved her objectives, tying up any loose ends and making them vanish for good.

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Austin's face beamed with hope to reunite with Nicole, oblivious to Vicki's ulterior motives. The mere thought of seeing Nicole again after all these days filled him with joy.

Seizing the moment to capture a photo of Austin's joyful face, Vicki sent Austin back and had the nanny take care of his evening routine.

Only when Austin went to bed did she text Jarrod back. I have been playing with Austin and only saw your message just now. I'm so thrilled you want to make this official. I love you.

She attached the photo of Austin's genuine smile she had captured earlier and sent it off to Jarrod.

Then, Vicki exchanged a knowing look with the nanny taking care of Austin's evening routine, who nodded and followed her.

Vicki moved to a secluded corner, away from any surveillance, and asked, How's that nanny holding up lately?

Vicki was referring to the nanny originally responsible for Austin's care, arranged by Nicole. That nanny truly cared for Austin and would never hurt him. No amount of money could sway her loyalty.

Therefore, Vicki had resorted to poisoning this loyal nanny, stealthily administering small doses of poison in the latter's food and beverages. Over a month, the toxins built up, and the nanny fell sick as expected.

Subsequently, the loyal nanny was in no condition to continue caring for Austin. Within the hospital Vicki had arranged, no doctors could pinpoint the exact issue, attributing the nanny's symptoms to gastrointestinal troubles.

Concerned, the loyal nanny was reluctant to leave Austins side since Nicole had entrusted Austins care to her. She considered Austin almost her own, determined to protect him.

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Because the loyal nanny refused hospitalization, Vicki relocated her to a storage area behind the villa, under the pretext of preventing Austin from catching any illness.

Vicki also ensured that medical staff attended to the loyal nanny, thus averting any suspicion about her actions.

Even Alec, such a sharp man, didnt notice anything amiss and praised Vicki when briefing Jarrod on the situation.

The nanny, having just taken care of Austins evening routine and was led away by Vicki, peered outside and murmured, It wont be long now. She probably wont make it to the next month.

Vickis eyes sparkled mischievously as she smiled. Please ensure shes well taken care of. I dont want her to pass away before my wedding. It will bring bad luck.

The nanny nodded.

Vicki said, Ive transferred the funds for your sons expenses abroad. Once this is all settled, Ill send over three years worth of costs.

The nanny was overjoyed and expressed her gratitude profusely.

Originally, this nannys son couldnt afford to study overseas due to financial constraints. Influenced by a peer, he insisted on pursuing education abroad. The nanny had tried talking sense into him, telling him about their familys money troubles. But her son went to extremes, refused to eat, and hurt himself to protest. Feeling like she had no choice, the nanny agreed to work with Vicki.

Vicki promised to cover her sons educational and living expenses in exchange for the nannys assistance in a darker scheme.

The nanny wouldnt dare target Jarrods son, nor did she want to face Jarrods potential wrath. After all, Jarrod was a respected figure, not easily crossed.

Yet, normally speaking, one wouldnt suspect a nanny, should anything go amiss. As long as one played it safe, nobody would find out a thing.

Over time without rousing anyones suspicion, the nanny transitioned from anxiety to the lack of a guilty conscience. Threading carefully seemed like a minor sacrifice for her sons bright future.

On the other side. Nicole sent another message to the nanny she had arranged for Austin, inquiring about Austins well-being. The response was reassuring with a photo.

The photo of Austin was taken recently, evident in Austins season-appropriate attire, looking healthy and well-cared for.

Nicole stared at Austins photo, a mix of yearning and turmoil in her eyes. There had been a time when her own pain was too great, making it unbearable for her to see Austins face. Austins presence was a painful reminder of Jarrod. She loved Austin deeply, yet despised Jarrod with every fiber of her being. These conflicting feelings rendered her unable to be the emotionally stable mother she wanted to be.

Her psychiatrist had recommended a temporary separation from Austin to help her stabilize emotionally.

Reluctantly, Nicole followed this advice, and during their time apart, she found solace in his photos. She studied each new photo intently, afraid of missing even the slightest detail.

Her fingers traced his photo tenderly, a loving expression on her face. Sometimes, she felt it might be a good idea to let Jarrod take care of Austin if he could provide a stable home. Maybe then, she could watch Austin grow up from afar and be there if he ever needed her.

Recently, Austin seemed to be adjusting well and hadnt mentioned her.

A pang of self-pity struck Nicole. Perhaps Austin preferred his new family Maybe he found her too emotionally unstable. She shied away from even watching Austin from a distance, terrified of not being accepted by him.

If Austin detested her, she resolved to let him go. She didnt see Austin just as her child, but as an independent individual whose thoughts she deeply respected.

As Nicole looked at the photo again, her finger gently caressed his cheek, but suddenly, her finger slipped, and the page rolled down to the bottom of the photo.

Something at the bottom of the picture caught her eye. Squinting, she enlarged the photo, a sense of dread washing over her as she spotted something amiss.