

Unbreakable 2341

Chapter 2341

Without hesitation, she reached for the phone to call the nanny.

Nicole tried relentlessly as she attempted to reach the nanny, but instead of a response, she received a text that made her heart sink.

Miss Lawrence, I had told you there are people at Mr. Schultz's house. He won't allow me to make calls to you. It would cause trouble if we were caught.

Nicole read the message over and over, feeling a cold unease. The nanny's tone was off. It wasn't like her at all. The nanny was a kind soul who treated Nicole and Austin like her own family, never using a tone that hinted at blame.

More suspiciously, the nanny never referred to Jarrod as Mr. Schultz.

Knowing Nicole's aversion to hearing Jarrod's name, the nanny always called him that person instead, carefully avoiding his surname.

As Nicole's hands trembled, she compared the newest photos with earlier ones and noticed a troubling detail. Austin's fingernails were untrimmed, appearing to have been neglected for weeks.

This was unlike the nanny, who knew to trim Austin's nails regularly to prevent him from scratching himself during his anxiety attacks at night.

The uncut nails in the recent photos indicated a lack of attention to Austin's needs, a stark contrast to the meticulous care the nanny had provided for years. Normally, such a small thing would have gone unnoticed, but Austin wasn't just any child. His needs were specific, and the nanny had always catered to them with precision. To Austin, the nanny was like a grandmother.

With growing concern, Nicole sent a message, trying to sound casual.

It's been so long since I've heard Austin's voice. I'd love to hear.

The reply came quickly. Miss Lawrence, I'll record his voice secretly and send it when the others aren't around. Don't worry. Austin is fine. He hasn't mentioned you at all.

Nicole chose not to respond, her lips tightening in a thin line.

That last sentence of the reply struck her as entirely unnecessary, heightening her suspicions and leaving a chill in her heart. The nanny knew how sensitive her own heart was to such remarks. How could the nanny tell her that Austin hadn't even mentioned her? The nanny knew it was a cruel jolt to her, a stark reminder that her only family might not need her anymore.

The nanny had been working for Nicole not just for a year or two, but for seven solid years. They had grown to rely on each other. The nanny, having no children of her own, showed no signs of any weaknesses that might lead her to harm Austin, even under duress.

Nicole had unshakeable faith in the nanny. A sudden change in the nannys demeanor after seven years

didnt make sense.

Nicoles mind raced to the only conclusion that seemed plausible. The person she was communicating with now wasnt the nanny she knew.

A cold fear gripped Nicole. If this was not her trusted nanny, then where was she?

Nicole had been explicit with Jarrod that Austin needed that very nanny, and Jarrod had agreed to have that nanny remain involved in Austins care, regardless of any other nannies. But now

Later that night, a video arrived swiftly. It showed Austin reciting a poem, with a womans voice in the background. Wow, Austin, youre doing so well! Come here, let me wipe your sweat. Is that okay? Youre so warm

It was Vickis voice.

Nicole was taken aback by how respectfully and obediently Austin interacted with Vicki.

The emotion Nicole felt was unusual. It was not the kind of anger that typically flared from jealousy, but a discomfort stemming from how unnaturally obedient Austin seemed. At his age, such a high level of respect and compliance toward someone new was unsettling. No child behaved as such. What was the matter with Austin?

In the video, a pair of slender hands gently wiped Austins forehead.

Chapter 2342

Then, Vickis voice chimed in, Austin, do you want some mango? Its sweet and delicious

Austin nodded in the video.

Nicoles heart lurched into her throat as she watched. She gasped, No, no! Austin was allergic to mangoes. How could he possibly agree to eat them?

When Jarrod had taken Austin away from Nicole, he had ensured the doctors checked and provided a list of Austins dietary restrictions, which the nanny had passed on to the staff at the Schultz residence.

How could Vicki consider giving Austin mangoes? This had to be intentional. Vicki was trying to harm Austin!

Panic surged through Nicole, her back drenched in sweat, her body trembling uncontrollably. She bolted up and ran, but in her haste, she tripped and fell. Pain shot through her head, her body aching from the impact.

Ignoring the pain, Nicole forced herself to her feet and ran again.

Reaching the ground floor, she hailed a taxi, driven by a desperate need to protect her son.

After entering the taxi, Nicole nervously directed the driver to Jarrods villa.

Situated halfway up the mountain rather than in the city center, Jarrods residence required over two hours of travel by taxi to reach.

However, the taxi halted at the mountains base. The driver informed, Miss, were prohibited from driving up to this estate. Do you possess any authorization allowing me to proceed? If not, regrettably, youll need to ascend on foot.

Nicole shook her head, aware that gaining permission to ascend was unlikely.

The driver continued, In that case, I apologize, miss. Kindly get out of the car and make your way up on foot.

Nicole acquiesced, settled the fare, and exited the vehicle.

As Nicole strolled away, the drivers gaze lingered on her silhouette, pondering if she might be yet another woman drawn to the callous charms of the affluent playboys.

Nestled along the slopes lay several opulent estates belonging to esteemed families. Within this encla

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ve, a scion might have callously wounded the affections of a certain woman.

Scaling the hill demanded a minimum of forty minutes on foot.

As Nicole reached the initial security checkpoint, stringent protocols barred outsiders from entry. However, armed with the access code discreetly obtained from Jarrods nanny, she confidently proceeded.

This precaution was devised in case of an emergency, allowing Nicole to get in for the scenario where even divine intervention would falter in rescuing Austin.

Upon inputting the code, Nicole gained entry.

The ascent from the mountains base to its midsection was considerable, compounded by Nicoles frail physical state. The relentless midday sun intensified her fatigue, each step became increasingly arduous and draining.

No soul traversed this route toward the mansion. Even the butler had a chauffeured conveyance arranged, sparing none the necessity of pedestrian travel.

Nicole pressed on for over forty minutes before arriving at Jarrods estate.

The mansions entrance stood firmly shut, prompting Nicole to approach and rap on its imposing door.

Chapter 2343

Emerging from within, a vigilant security guard inquired, Whom do you seek?

Providing the nannys name, Nicole was met with a perplexed frown as the guard rebutted, No such individual resides here.

Even if such a person existed, servants were not typically recognized by the security. They only acknowledged the masters of the household and individuals of significance.

Undeterred, Nicole asserted, I am the biological mother of the young master here, and I demand to see him.

The security guards exchanged glances. While acknowledging Austins presence, they remained oblivious to any mention of his biological mother.

Furthermore, Vicki stood as the sole visitor available to attend to Austin. Suddenly, this woman emerged, claiming to be his biological mother. How could they readily accept her assertion and grant her entry?

Additionally, even if she were indeed Austins biological mother, they still couldnt permit her entry. As they hadnt received instructions from Jarrod, they were unable to grant her access.

They gestured firmly, stating, Madam, if indeed you are the young masters mother, you can contact Mr. Schultz to arrange for security clearance. Were simply fulfilling our duties, endeavoring not to inconvenience you.

The security guards of the mansion were cunning. Having encountered numerous purported VIPs of little significance, they refrained from condescension. Instead, they maintained a consistently polite demeanor toward all individuals. They didnt want to offend Austins biological mother if Nicole was telling the truth. They dared not exhibit any discourtesy toward her. Even if she wasnt, exhibiting politeness remained a virtue. However, admission for her was only contingent upon them obtaining directions.

Nicole considered the guards stance accurate. In the absence of Jarrods directives, access to the estate was prohibited. She retrieved her phone, pondered briefly, and then dialed Jarrods number.

Unexpectedly, it was Alec who answered the call.

The recent conflict over the wedding still lingered, and Alecs response to Nicole was far from courteous. Instead, his tone carried a hint of sarcasm. Miss Lawrence, what prompts you to contact Mr. Schultz? Its quite rare. What? You got good news?

Nicole disregarded his ironic tone and inquired straightforwardly, Is Jarrod available?

Hes currently engaged in a meeting. Before Nicole could interject, Alec added, He is addressing the aftermath of your previous blunder.

Miss Lawrence, your conduct at Roscoes wedding was rather startling.

Im uncertain what prompted Mr. Schultz to retrieve you from the wedding venue, but as a consequence, the collaboration with the Watts family has unraveled.

Its not that the Watts family proposed discontinuing the collaboration. Rather, Mr. Schultz harbors a

disdain for Roscoe and decisively terminates the arrangement. While the termination was quite gratifying, it necessitates finding another partner, hence he is now diligently pursuing alternatives despite sustaining injuries.

Nicole had never realized Alec could be so persistently bothersome.

He had talked for a long time, yet none of it aligned with her interests. Jarrods personal affairs failed to captivate her attention. Whether or not Jarrod terminated the cooperation with the Watts family mattered little to her. After all, the Watts family business didnt concern Roscoe.

It was commendable that Jarrod was willing to stir up trouble for the Watts family. Recently, the Watts family had become less audacious, and at least they werent concocting any nefarious schemes against Roscoe. At present, her primary concern revolved around Austins safety.

Nicole said, Alec, could you kindly request Jarrod to take my call? I have an urgent matter to discuss.

Do you truly expect Mr. Schultz to forsake his duties merely to attend to your call? Alec asked.

Nicole, momentarily taken aback, responded, I do have an exceptionally urgent matter

How do I articulate your character, Miss Lawrence? Alec interrupted her again. Every time you seek Mr. Schultz, its never for anything commendable. Your association invariably spells trouble, yet he persistently cleans up after you. Consider the incident on that mountain road. You lack gratitude for Mr. Schultzs life-saving favor, and as if that wasnt enough, you even took off to find Roscoe while Mr. Schultz lay unconscious. Your audacity is truly something!

Chapter 2344

Do you not realize the extent of his sacrifices to rescue you, bearing wounds across his body? The stick not only shattered the ten -hour work of the surgeons needle but also wounded him emotionally.

Even then, he acted out of concern for you. However, you seemed to wish for his demise. How could you be so heartless, Miss Lawrence?

Alecs agitation heightened as he posed the question once more. Or perhaps I should inquire, do you possess a conscience at all? Despite Mr. Schultz owing everything to your family, after enduring countless disasters and hardships on your behalf, one would expect some form of reciprocation.

With a sneer, Alec continued, Yet not only has there been no reciprocation, but Ive observed your audacity growing, your determination to undermine him becoming more pronounced. But what does it matter? Let me make this clear. Since Mr. Schultz returned from abroad, hes been operating legally. Even under scrutiny, the outcome remains unchanged. Do you comprehend? Ive stood by him for countless years and my allegiance lies with him. A mere glance from him obviates the need for explicit instructions and Ill handle everything.

Alec scoffed. Miss Lawrence, do my words resonate with you?

Nicoles thoughts were consumed by concern for Austin, hindering her from fully comprehending Alecs message. Nevertheless, she managed to glean some understanding. It dawned on her that all the nefarious activities of the Schultz Group in recent times were orchestrated by Alec. Attempting to implicate Jarrod from that angle would prove futile.

The more Nicole remained silent, the more Alecs anger intensified.

To him, Nicole appeared heartless and irrational.

Everyone had a unique perspective, and Alec naturally couldnt comprehend Nicoles viewpoint.

Frustrated, Alec exclaimed, Do you get it? I handled all the dirty work! Mr. Schultz advised restraint, but I resisted. The business world is brutal and one must be ruthless to survive! Im willing to bear the burden for him. Even if someone attacks me, I wont flinch for the sake of Mr. Schultzs future.

With a cold tone, Alec asked, Do you think I can stand by and watch you harm Mr. Schultz?

Finally, Nicole interjected, Alec, I need to talk to Jarrod about Austin.

She lacked the strength to confront Jarrod or even contemplate it.

For now, her only concern was Austins safety.

Unexpectedly, Alec laughed upon hearing this. Miss Lawrence, your thoughts dwell on your son now? If genuine concern for him existed, you would have refrained from harming his biological father, right?

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He commented, Mr. Schultz exemplifies exceptional kindness. Had it been another individual, your fate would have been sealed many times over.

Nicole anxiously inquired, Who has been tending to Austin Lately?

Alecs opinion did not trouble her, but she sensed his unwavering loyalty to Jarrod could shield Austin from harm. Thus, she opted to inquire.

Alec frowned and replied, Miss Hampton has been tending to him.

Nicoles heart sank, prompting her to assert, I desire to see Austin. I am presently at the doorway of his villa. Kindly seek Jarrods approval for me to visit him immediately. My apprehensions for Austins well-being persist.

Alec scoffed. Whats there to worry about? Miss Hampton tends to Austin admirably. She escorted him to meet Mr. Schultz yesterday. Under her tutelage, Austin addressed Mr. Schultz as Daddy. She excels in both care and upbringing. Consequently, Mr. Schultz intends to expedite their union. Rest assured, Miss Lawrence, you are cordially invited to witness their forthcoming nuptials.

Nicoles heart plummeted deeper still. Jarrod wanted to marry Vicki as soon as possible? Despite recognizing Vickis substantial assistance for Jarrod and her suitability as his future spouse, the announcement still came as a jolt.

While Jarrod and Vicki had cohabitated as betrothed partners, their wedding date had been contingent on Nicoles appeal and review of the fight for Austins custody. What spurred this sudden urgency?

Upon their union, Nicoles chances to obtain custody of Austin would be further attenuated.

Chapter 2345

Vicki possessed a talent for masquerading and hoodwinking the public with her facade of innocence. Yet beneath, she harbored a heart of unmitigated cruelty. None rivaled her in cruelty. Jarrod would be better served to marry anyone but Vicki.

Nicoles apprehension deepened, prompting her resolve to enter Jarrods villa to check on Austin stronger. Given the impossibility of seeking Jarrods approval of her entry, she resolved to explore alternative ways.

Addressing Alec, Nicole voiced her concern, Alec, theres cause for concern regarding Miss Hampton. I implore you to dedicate more attention to Austin. After all, he is also Jarrods child.

This served as a reminder for Alec, who possessed intelligence and wouldnt fall prey to deception easily. While Vicki excelled in the art of deception, her facade was destined to crumble eventually.

Following the phone calls conclusion, Nicole pondered alternative approaches, yet the mansions formidable security posed insurmountable obstacles. Scaling the walls or navigating the backyard proved futile endeavors.

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Hence, Nicole resorted to a rudimentary and inelegant tactic: vocalization. Positioned by the mansions gate, she vocalized her call for the nanny, confident that the household staff would recognize her voice. Her sole aim was to assert her presence and intent.

Deliberately refraining from uttering Austins name, Nicole feared unsettling him.

Given Austins unique nature, Nicole handled every aspect concerning him with utmost caution.

Nicole shouted, Kamilah, Kamilah, are you there?

After several repetitions, security personnel intervened, urging her to desist. Madam, shouting in this residential vicinity is prohibited. Should you persist, I shall be obliged to request your departure.

The security guards demeanor shifted from courteous to apprehensive, not out of concern for nuisance but rather out of fear of offending.

To them, Nicoles conduct suggested she lacked familiarity with Jarrod. Where she connected, shed refrain from such clamor, and Jarrod would have likely provided instructions for her entry.

Undeterred by the guards attempts to shoo her away, Nicole asserted, My purpose is to meet Kamilah today. If you prefer not to endure my calls, kindly ascertain Kamilahs presence within. Thats all I ask.

Firmly, the guard replied, Madam, I cannot assist in such matters. Entering the mansion to locate someone is beyond our purview. Your actions are untenable. Should you persist in causing a disturbance, immediate eviction will be necessary.

Nicole, retrieving her phone, countered, Kamilah and I have lost contact, fueling my concern. Failure to reconnect today will compel police involvement. Do you wish to avoid such consequences? A simple confirmation of Kamilahs presence can avert any turmoil. I pledge to depart promptly upon hearing her voice during the call, disrupting none. Agreed?

Nicole proposed a compromise, prompting the guards to weigh the options. Indeed, tasking the butler with confirming an identity inside posed no significant challenge. Conversely, escorting Nicole away

risked escalated ramifications, should she resort to police intervention.

After deliberation, one of the guards interjected, Wait here. Ill consult the butler for confirmation. But once you receive the answer, refrain from further disturbance.

Nicole nodded gravely. You have my word. I wont trouble you further. My concern lies solely with Kamilahs well-being, as Ive been unable to reach her.

Ensuring Kamilahs safety was paramount to safeguarding Austin. With Kamilahs presence, Nicole had faith in Austins protection. Yet now

Considering Austins circumstances, it seemed likely Kamilah was either under constraint or unable to attend to Austins needs conveniently.

Nicoles mind raced with conjecture, heightening her anxiety.

Shortly after, the guard emerged from within, conveying, Madam, the butler relayed that Kamilah is indisposed and under care. Regrettably, she cannot contact you presently. You should return and await her communication once she recuperates.

Nicoles apprehension deepened. This sudden claim of illness to the point of lacking the strength to make a call? Yet, she had just recently communicated with Kamilah through texts. This discrepancy strongly suggested the sender of the texts was an imposter.

Nicole shook her head firmly and implored, Sir, kindly allow me entry to see Kamilah. I cannot rest until Ive laid eyes on her

Chapter 2346

You're being entirely unreasonable! The security guards' frustration flared. He had already flouted protocol by relaying an outsider's message. Now, with Nicole refusing to leave, if the butler reported it, he would bear the blame.

His demeanor toward Nicole shifted, his tone curt as he addressed her directly, Madam, are you refusing to depart? Then do not hold me accountable for any discourtesy.

Two security guards swiftly approached, grasping Nicole's shoulders and escorting her outside.

Nicole fought valiantly, but she was no match for the strength of the two burly security guards.

As they restrained her, one guard said, Miss, we really don't want to do this. We don't want to upset anyone. If you just cooperate, it won't come to this, okay?

Desperate, Nicole pleaded, My child is in danger. I need to call the police!

One of the guards chuckled dismissively. Miss, are you serious? The young master is always out on the balcony, looking perfectly healthy. What danger are you talking about? Are you paranoid?

Hearing this, Nicole's fear subsided slightly, though her worry lingered.

The guard continued, Look, even if you call the police, they won't take such a report seriously. You know that, right? Go ahead and try, but you might find yourself the one in trouble. You could even end up in a psychiatric ward. The young master is well cared for by Miss Hampton. She's a wonderful stepmother, very attentive. She visits daily to look after him.

Nicole's expression darkened. Before Vicki's wedding with Jarrod, she was certain Vicki wouldn't harm Austin. But now, with things changed, she wasn't so sure.

Vicki's actions against Kamilah, the nanny who had been taking care of Austin and trusted by Austin, were to gauge Jarrod's reactions. If Jarrod showed indifference to Kamilah's wellbeing, it could suggest that Austin might be at risk if Vicki made a move.

Though it was all conjecture, Nicole clung to the adage, Better safe than sorry. She absolutely could not allow this to happen.

Determined, she yelled, Vicki, come out! Vicki, come out!

The guards tried to silence Nicole, but it was too late.

Breaking free from the guards' grasp with newfound strength, fueled by her burning desire to protect Austin, Nicole rushed to the door, pounding on it and calling for Vicki.

Moments later, the door swung open.

Vicki intervened upon seeing the security guards manhandling Nicole.

Stop, stop. This is Austin's mother. You can't treat her like this.

Vicki approached with a calm and gentle demeanor, appearing very much the lady of the house, and asked Nicole, Are you hurt?

Nicole doubted Vicki's sincerity but knew she had to tread carefully.

Suppressing her anger, she inquired, Miss Hampton, why has the nanny caring for Austin fallen ill?

Vicki looked genuinely surprised by the question. Nicole, I'm not sure about the nanny's sudden illness. After all, sickness is common. It's part of life. Are you suggesting I'm responsible?

Vicki's expression turned sorrowful, and she seemed on the verge of tears. It's tough being a stepmother. I try my best for Austin, but I can't manage everything, especially not the health of an elderly nanny. Can you understand that, Nicole?

The security guards found it difficult to watch the exchange anymore.

Chapter 2347

They believed Vicki was doing more than enough, and Nicole's demands seemed unreasonable. Allowing the future hostess to be humbled in front of the boss's ex was unacceptable. It was time for them to demonstrate their support.

One of the guards, feeling protective of Vicki, stepped forward, his presence commanding. Miss Hampton, this woman is causing a disturbance. Perhaps we should escort her out to avoid further trouble.

No need, Vicki quickly said, her voice still warm and soothing.

Austin's mother is understandably worried about her child's caregiver. It's natural for her to feel anxious. She didn't mean any harm. She's just concerned for her loved ones. Let's not be too harsh on her.

Vicki's words subtly painted Nicole as unreasonable and overly focused on her own concerns without showing any hint of respect.

Nicole, disliking such indirect manipulations, refused to engage in Vicki's games. Vicki, may I see Kamilah? she asked.

You had called Jarrod earlier, right? If he hadn't granted you access, unfortunately, there's nothing I can do, Vicki responded with a show of helplessness.

Vicki had been watching Nicole from the balcony since her arrival, observing her every move, including her desperate phone call. Despite Nicole's pleas, Jarrod had not permitted her entry.

Vicki felt her position was finally solid. She was glad she hadn't heeded Doreen's advice to make things more difficult for Nicole.

Instead, she continued to cultivate her image as a devoted wife and mother, which had significantly solidified Jarrod's trust in her, diminishing any remaining influence Nicole might have held.

Can I at least talk to Austin? Nicole asked, her tone more subdued, almost pleading.

Given that Austin's wellbeing was now ostensibly in Vicki's control, Nicole knew she had little leverage.

Vicki's expression turned visibly self-satisfied as she denied the request. 'I'm sorry, Nicole. Jarrod doesn't want you to have any contact with Austin.'

Rejected once more, Nicole felt her frustration mounting, leaving her at a loss.

Vicki, seizing on Nicole's vulnerability, lowered her voice conspiratorially. 'Nicole, don't say I never offered you anything. Why don't you come back to work tonight? If I'm in a good mood, I might just let you see Austin.'

Nicole's head snapped up. 'Really?'

Of course, Vicki replied with a gleeful smile. 'After all, when Jarrod's away, I'm in charge of the Schultz household.'

Nicole was painfully aware that Vicki was right. Jarrod was too preoccupied with business matters to manage the home, relying instead on a hostess to oversee domestic affairs.

'I'll hold you to that promise, but you must let me see Austin. If you deceive me, I'll fight you with everything I've got,' Nicole warned Vicki sternly.

However, Vicki barely took Nicole's threats seriously. 'To fight with everything she had got? With someone she considered frail and nearing their end? It seemed laughable to her.'

Vicki waved her hand dismissively. 'I've said you'll see him, but'

Vicki paused, her smile turning sly. 'You'll need to meet my conditions.'

'Okay,' Nicole agreed reluctantly. 'I'll do what you ask, as long as I get to see Austin.'

'Make sure you dress appropriately,' Vicki added, her smile chilling.

Chapter 2348

Nicole felt a surge of apprehension, but recognized she had little choice. She needed to prioritize Austin's and Kamilah's safety, even if it meant sacrificing her own pride. However, she resolved that if Vicki pushed her too far, she would take drastic measures that would surprise even herself. She hoped it wouldn't come to that.

Back at the hospital, Jarrod finished his video meeting and was compelled by his doctor to return to bed for rest.

Alec, seeing him, dutifully reported, 'Sir, Miss Lawrence called earlier, but I didn't interrupt your meeting.'

Jarrod's face, marked by impassive brows and eyes, masked his inner thoughts, rendering them unreadable.

Amidst the enveloping quiet, Alec broke the silence and declared, Miss Lawrence requested to see the child, but I denied her. Your son has just started to smile again. I don't want him to slide back into gloom.

Jarrold's reaction was muted, almost as if in agreement with Alec's decision.

Breathing out a long sigh, Alec felt a weight lift off his shoulders.

He was certain Jarrod, severely injured this time, would no longer concern himself with Nicole or show any further interest.

It wasn't just physical scars. Jarrod's heart had taken a beating too.

A detached person like him, once wounded, would invariably shut himself off, exactly as he was doing now. He was desperate and heartbroken.

For a man, nothing stung more than seeing the woman he loved, love another.

Nicole had fallen for Roscoe, and forcing her to stay with Jarrod would only prolong their misery. Jarrod had shown restraint. He didn't trouble her much, focusing his frustrations on Roscoe instead, which was commendable under the circumstances.

Jarrold asked no questions, prompting Alec to hold his tongue.

The pleas Alec had repeatedly made to Nicole on Jarrod's behalf had fallen on deaf ears, which was truly heartbreaking.

As for the allegations that Vicki posed a threat to Austin, Alec kept vigilant. He closely monitored any

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potential danger to Austin.

Although he had yet to see any signs of Vicki's malice toward Austin, he remained alert, just in case.

Alec harbored deep reservations about Vicki. Merely being decent momentarily wasn't sufficient. One needed to demonstrate enduring goodness. Would Vicki genuinely regard Austin as her own, or would her feelings alter once she had a child of her own?

While Alec mulled over these doubts, Jarrod abruptly asked, Go ask Dr. Burton when I'm scheduled for the surgery.

Surgery? Alec asked, his brow furrowed in confusion, Sir, which surgery are you referring to?

With a serene expression, Jarrod simply stated, Vasectomy.

Alec was taken aback. He stood there, dumbfounded, for a long moment before stepping closer, his voice tinged with urgency. What? Why?

And how could Jarrod want a vasectomy?

Given Austin's precarious health, it was uncertain whether he could grow up without complications. If Jarrod went through with a vasectomy, what would happen if something were to befall Austin?

Would the Schultz family then be left without an heir?

Chapter 2349

Jarrold remained expressionless, clearly having made his decision.

A vasectomy before marriage was indeed rare.

Noticing Jarrold's silence, Alec tried to sway him. Mr. Schultz, are you sure about this? Think about your family lineage. Families expand by having children. I'm sure your parents, watching over us from above, would want to witness your family grow.

Alec consciously avoided any mention of Austin's fragile condition, knowing Jarrold wouldn't tolerate it.

To Jarrold, Austin was his only child, and he had no intention of having others. Jarrold, typically reserved and detached, didn't believe he was suited to fatherhood. That was why he planned to marry Vicki. He wanted to ensure someone was there to look after Austin.

Jarrold had known Vicki for years. Unlike Doreen, he found Vicki had never crossed the line into wrongdoing so far. She was notably kinder.

Her gentle side made her an ideal candidate for motherhood.

Jarrold had also taken the precaution of drafting a will, placing Austin at the forefront as his primary heir, contingent on no unforeseen accidents. This gave him confidence that Vicki would never mistreat Austin. If anything happened to Austin, Vicki would find herself without any support. He was confident she understood this and would act accordingly.

There's no need for delay. Let Dr. Burton handle it as soon as he can. Jarrold's decision to undergo a vasectomy was not just about his marriage. It was also driven by a fear of manipulation and the possibility of another child. He was unwilling to accept a child that wasn't brought to the world by Nicole.

Alec attempted to argue, but Jarrold remained unresponsive, his silence a clear sign that his decision was final. Once Jarrold made up his mind, no one could sway him.

Yet, Alec found it hard to come to terms with this decision. Even he, a man of modest means, understood the value of perpetuating the family line, be it through a son or a daughter. His desire was to bring a healthy child into the world. Maybe his longing wasn't about lineage at all, but rather a testament to his existence.

In Alec's book, Jarrold's choice seemed fraught with risks. However, since it wasn't his life, all he could do was respect the decision.

As Alec was about to step out to make the call, Jarrold called out, Wait a moment.

What is it, sir?

Jarrold instructed, Let Vicki know about this Alec was taken aback. Jarrold was planning a vasectomy and yet, he wanted his future wife to be informed. Was he trying to drive her away?

Jarrold simply desired to test whether Vicki meant her previous words.

He had explicitly stated to Vicki that he wished to have no other children in this lifetime and asked if she could commit to a life with him under this term. Vicki had promptly agreed, without any reservations.

Instead of asking Vicki to undergo a female sterilization operation, which would entail a physical sacrifice, Jarrold respected her enough as his chosen partner not to impose such a demand. He decided to undergo a vasectomy.

By allowing Alec to leak the news to Vicki, Jarrold was providing Vicki with another opportunity. It was a chance to reconsider her decision.

Alec understood well that those determined to leave would do so regardless. Take Nicole for instance. Jarrold had experienced this painfully with Nicole. Despite his desperate efforts to keep her, she left him coldly. Revealing such critical news before Jarrold's wedding with Vicki seemed wise, allowing them to separate amicably early on if Vicki couldn't come to terms with it.

Satisfied with Jarrold's decision, Alec nodded and exited.

Meanwhile, Jarrold pulled out his phone and replayed Austin's video once more. Austin resembled him strikingly, with the same furrowed eyebrows and piercing eyes. Yet, he wondered whether Austin shared his stoic demeanor.

Becoming a father had clarified many of his expectations. His relationship with Nicole was one of mutual destruction. Staying together meant binding each other with ropes. Aware of the toxicity of their bond, Jarrold was determined to shield his child from it.

Since change was impossible, Jarrold chose to purge his thoughts of Nicole. Dwelling on her only fueled his anger, jeopardizing his ability to remain a composed and rational father for Austin.

Chapter 2350

Jarrold set his phone aside, closed his eyes, and employed the meditation techniques his therapist had recommended.

Gradually, his emotions stabilized, and the anxiety within him eased significantly.

That evening, Nicole visited Kingbel Club as she had been directed.

Jemma spotted her and was taken aback.

Knowing of Nicole's recent ordeal, Jemma had expected her to be recuperating. Yet, here she was.

Puzzled and concerned, Jemma furrowed her brows and approached Nicole, asking, Why are you here? Are you feeling better now?

Nicole nodded reassuringly. I'm fine, and my injuries aren't as severe as you might think.

In truth, Nicoles body hadnt fully recuperated. While her injuries werent as grave as Jarrods, she had endured being trampled and suffered broken ribs during the incident. However, she opted to downplay her condition to spare Jemma from unnecessary worry.

Observing Nicoles pale complexion, Jemma remained skeptical of her reassurances. Frowning, she insisted, You still havent disclosed why youre here today. Given your current state, you should prioritize rest and recovery.

Im here today to cover a shift. A familiar client invited me,
Nicole said.

A familiar client? Jemma was skeptical. Who might that be?

Nicole hadnt been in the profession for very long, and Jemma had arranged all of Nicoles clients thus far. Therefore, Nicoles mention of a familiar client puzzled Jemma, who was unaware of anyone Nicole might be referring to.

Jemmas concern was sincere.

Although Nicole couldnt comprehend why Jemma exhibited such concern for her, she understood that

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there must be a valid reason behind it.

Regrettably, Nicole found herself unable to confide in Jemma about the truth. Vickis warning echoed in her mind, reminding her of the consequences of disclosing any details about the events of tonight, or else, Vicki threatened to shun her from seeing Austin.

Dont worry, Jemma, It truly is a familiar client, Nicole assured, opting for vagueness to evade further scrutiny.

Jemma sighed, expressing her exasperation, Youre becoming increasingly audacious. I seem to never know you.

Nicole smiled, responding, Thats not entirely true. You introduced me to this profession, and Ill always heed your guidance, my mentor.

Jemma found amusement in Nicoles words.

I never realized you possessed such eloquence. Jemma chuckled. But refrain from calling me mentor. Do you truly intend to remain in this field indefinitely? Once things settle down, you should consider leaving.

Though Jemma was aware of Vickis actions against Nicole, she felt powerless against the influence of the Hampton family. Despite this, she silently supported Nicole in any way she could.

This extended to the incident where Nicole was caught eavesdropping on a clients conversation at the club. Jemma intervened by releasing a cat to divert the clients attention, thus preventing Nicole from being discovered. The consequences of such an exposure would have been dire indeed.

Those affluent individuals spared no effort in safeguarding their secrets. Even if they refrained from resorting to lethal measures, they were capable of inflicting significant harm. The mere thought of it filled Jemma with dread.