

## A Contract Marriage With My Boss by Anna Shannel Lin Chapter 132

On Sunday, Charles announced to everyone that he wanted to take Sarah out as they were starting to feel bored from having been stuck at home for so long. Christina wasn't happy to hear them going out alone, but Mr. Thomas encouraged them to have a day off to enjoy themselves. Thus they went out for the day.

Once in the car, Charles said to Sarah. "I haven't seen your smile for a long time, are you in a better mood lately?"

Sarah covered her mouth with one hand and smiled, "I'm only pregnant, but suddenly everyone is treating me so well, which makes me feel a little embarrassed."

"This is your first pregnancy, and in our family, it's the first grandchild, which makes it extra special and everyone is happy." Charles suddenly had a sad undertone in his voice when speaking of his father. "And my dad...you know... he has been waiting for this for a long time now, and finally his dream came true..." he sighed helplessly.

It was evident that Charles's relationship with his father had improved and that they had become more found and less indifferent toward each other. Sarah knew that Charles wanted to have a child to help fulfill his father's dream. Although Mr. Thomas had ignored Charles in the past, he had tried hard to make up for it by supporting Charles's marriage, and Charles had stopped complaining so much about him.

However, they didn't have much time left to make up for the lost time given that Mr. Thomas's condition was not stable, and although he was feeling better now, everyone knew that his days were numbered.

Thinking of this, Sarah also felt sad and lowered her head, "I'm sorry for your dad. If I had gotten pregnant earlier, he would be able to enjoy his grandchild by now."

"Although he may not be able to see his grandchild, the fact that you are pregnant makes him happy and content. When he was younger, he dedicated himself completely to his business and never cared about his family; but now that he has become older, he became the loving father who cares about us. I really don't know whether to hold on to my grudge or to respect him."

“Your dad treats you well now, and he has done many good things for you, including investing in your company.” Sarah reminded him.

Charles nodded. “I know, I’m not complaining about him now. It is useless to feel sad. Dad hopes that we will have a happy life, we need to behave well in his presence to not make him worry.”

Sarah nodded in agreement but felt so impulsive lately. She really shouldn’t argue with Charles or think about divorce anymore.

Charles stared silently in front of him with a melancholic expression, as if he was thinking about something. Finally, he said in a low voice, “I have been thinking a lot lately. I did so many things wrong. I shouldn’t trust my mom over you and neglect you! Sarah, I’m sorry, I shouldn’t have let you be wronged.”

It had never occurred to Sarah that Charles would apologize to her. Stunned, she stared at him. Charles also looked at her with a sincere and honest expression, as if his words were coming from the bottom of his heart.

Sarah started to feel emotional and moved. Lately, she had suffered many wrong things, and now Charles finally seemed to realize it, and he apologized to her. He had treated her so well after knowing that she was pregnant, so she should feel happy, shouldn’t she? But she felt like she wanted to cry, so she quickly lowered her head to conceal her tears. “I also have done some wrong things, I’m sorry, too!”

Charles suddenly grabbed her hand and said, “Whatever happened, it’s in the past now. From now on, we should focus on lifelong happiness together!”

Sarah nodded. Their eyes locked, and after a while, they finally both smiled. Charles said gently, “Well, don’t be sad today. My cousin has a mansion in the suburbs where there are good fresh air and beautiful natural plants. Let me take you there for the day to relax and take a look around!” He ignited the car and started to drive.

Sarah never expected that the promise that they just gave to each other was only a promise and that it may never actually come true.

Once they arrived at the mansion, they found that Charles’s cousin was not home, but he had instructed his workers to receive Charles and Sarah on his behalf. The workers had been waiting for them to arrive, showing them around the place.

It was a big mansion, divided into several sections, including a botanical garden, an area with exotic animals, a golf course, a horse racing track, and a leisure area. There was a service bar, a swimming pool, and other luxurious facilities to enjoy. Sarah thought that it had a feel of a farm. She was surprised to see the place so extensive and luxurious.

“Your cousin... did he build this place just for entertainment? It’s amazing!” She asked.

Charles smiled, “He’s a wealthy man and can spend money on whatever he feels like. He built this mansion for his private retreat, but he is planning to open it up as a retreat for other rich people to come and relax. He knows that we are here today, so he closed it up for everyone else so you won’t be disturbed.”

Looking at the beautifully designed scene in front of her, Sarah felt excited and wanted to explore the whole place. Holding Charles’s hand, she said, “Where shall we start to play first?”

Charles asked her, “What do you want to do?”

“Can you ride a horse? Cowboys are so handsome. Shall we go horse riding?”

Charles smiled. “Okay, but you have to promise me that you won’t ride without my supervision. What if something happened?”

Sarah nodded excitedly, looking forward to going horse riding, “I know, I know. Let’s go!”

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Charles smiled and asked the workers to take them to the stable. Given that the yard with the horses was a bit far away, they drove there using a golf cart. From the golf cart, they enjoyed the beautiful scenery around them as the worker explained to them everything about the place, acting as a tourist guide.

It took nearly half an hour to get to the horse track. As expected, the place was empty except for a few workers. Since Charles had been here before, he had his own horse in the stable. Charles helped Sarah to change into appropriate riding clothes, then took his horse out of the stable to the race track.

It was a big, beautiful brown horse. It was the first time for Sarah to come so close to such a big horse. Surprised, she exclaimed. "A Ferghana horse!"

Charles laughed proudly. "If you praise it, Dragon will be happy! Isn't it, Dragon!" He touched the horse's main. The horse neighed as if it understood Charles.

Sarah was surprised again and said, "His name is Dragon? Can it understand what you say?"

"You think?" Charles laughed as he guided the horse to the track, Sarah following him. She wanted to ride the horse, but Charles was too worried about her safety and just rode the horse in front of her, giving her a private show.

Sarah looked at him and shouted. "I usually only get to look at handsome cowboys in telenovelas, but today I have a private show all for myself!"

Charles stopped beside her and asked, "And who do you think is more handsome?"

"Of course, you're more handsome... no one can compete with you!" she teased him.

Charles jumped off the horse and embraced her tightly, and they laughed and played with each other.

Once the workers noticed them happy and content, they left and went on with their work.

After a while, Sarah insisted on riding herself, but Charles was still worried about her and said, "Only if I'm leading the horse for you, you can ride slowly. I will control the horse, understand? If you don't promise, I won't let you ride!"

Sarah had no choice but to agree, and Charles helped her get on the horse, but was still very worried about her safety and kept repeating. "Be careful, hold the reins tightly. Don't kick its belly."

Sarah felt him overprotective and said energetically, "I know, I know, I am not a three-year-old child anymore, I'll listen to you!"

After a while, when Charles saw that Sarah was following his instructions, he finally felt a little reassured. Charles led the horse strolling around the track, so

slowly that Sarah started to feel bored. She wanted to ride by herself, but Charles kept refusing.

Suddenly Charles's phone rang. Given that he had left his phone in his suit pocket on the foyer, Charles asked Sarah to get down from the horse, but she wasn't done riding yet and urged Charles to answer the phone. In this way, she would be able to ride alone for a little bit.

Charles was still hesitating to leave, but Sarah insisted. "I'll stay here and let the horse walk slowly around the yard. You hurry to answer the phone. I'm Okay!"

Charles saw that she was enjoying herself and looked really happy, so he finally agreed but still kept repeating to stay safe. Finally, he left to answer the phone.

Sarah didn't move, just sat there and allowed the horse to graze on the grass. Although she wasn't riding, she felt happy to have escaped Charles's overprotectiveness for a moment.

The horse walked peacefully for a while, then suddenly noticed a piece of red cloth in front of him. The horse stared at the red material for a while without moving.

Sarah felt that the horse had stopped walking and looked up in the same direction, where she saw a man waving a red flag. Before she could recognize who it was, the horse suddenly started to run away.

Sarah almost fell and tried to sit firmly, but the horse ran even faster. At a loss of what to do, she started shouting out, "Charles, Charles!"

Charles was on the phone, occasionally looking toward Sarah to make sure that she was okay. Suddenly, he saw the horse running, and he quickly ran after them, also shouting, "Sarah!"

The horse ran faster and faster until suddenly a string of firecrackers was thrown on its path from behind a bush. Once the horse stepped on it, the firecrackers exploded. The loud sound frightened the horse, which neighed loudly as it jumped out of the fixed training ground and ran towards the broad racetrack.

Sarah was almost frightened to death and started to cry, holding tightly onto the horse, but since the horse was galloping full speed, it was still very bumpy. She felt that she was going to fall and kept calling out to Charles. "Help. Help!"

Charles was so frightened and kept shouting her name, “Sarah!” and quickly jumped onto another horse and chased them as fast as he could.

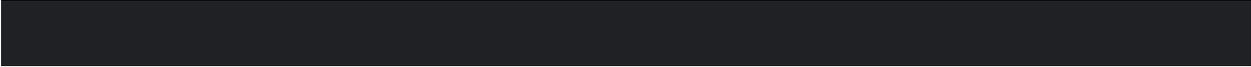
Galloping after Sarah, Charles kept shouting her name repeatedly. “Sarah, Sarah!”

Sarah was in a state of shock, the wind whirling around her ears. She couldn’t hear Charles’s voice at all. The only thing she heard was her own heart, which was beating so violently in her chest as if it was going to explode. She grabbed tightly around the horse’s neck but still felt that she was going to fall.

She was terrified.

Charles also was afraid of her falling down and was worried about her pregnancy. If she fell, there was a high chance that she would lose the baby. Hearing her scream, his heart nearly jumped out of his chest. He whipped the horse to run faster and catch up with Dragon. Once he came closer, he started throwing a rope over to Dragon’s neck, trying to reel him in.

After several attempts, he finally succeeded in throwing the rope over the Dragon’s head, pulling it in an effort to make him stop running. He wanted to come close enough to grab the reins himself to control the horse and called out. “Sarah, don’t worry, I’ll help you.”



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Finally, Sarah seemed to hear Charles’s voice and turned to him and cried out, “Charles!”

Charles gritted his teeth and tried to bring the mad horse to a stop. He finally was able to reach over and grab the reins and started to control the horse

Charles was an experienced rider, with more than a decade of horse riding since high school. He thought he had good equestrian skills. Once he had control of the reins, he knew he could control the horse enough to keep Sarah safe, even if the horse was scared. However, the same moment he pulled back Sarah’s horse, the horse stamped on some explosive firecrackers again.

Bang-Bang-Bang-Bang, the small firecrackers exploded, frightened the horse again. The horse was about to start running off again, but Charles had control of

the reins and stopped him, causing it to raise its front legs high into the air in protest neighing loudly.

Despite Sarah's effort to hold onto the saddle, she was thrown off the horse by its powerful movement. Terrified, she screamed. "Ah... Help me!"

Charles heard her cry out for help, her eyes wide open, "Sarah!" He screamed back as he saw Sarah losing her grip. Charles had never been so frightened before, he was more afraid of Sarah or the baby getting hurt than to lose his own life.

Charles had seen many people becoming disabled from falling off a horse and panicked at the thought of what could happen to Sarah if she fell. Disregarding everything else, he jumped off his horse to catch Sarah, who fell directly on top of him.

Though Sarah was not heavy, Charles got hurt on his back from jumping off the horse to save her life. Disregarding his pain, he held Sarah tightly as his body smashed onto the hard ground. If Sarah and the baby were okay, he didn't care about his own pain. The only thing that mattered right now was their safety.

Sarah was scared that she would die if she fell off and did not expect Charles to jump down to save her, risking his own life. Feeling a sense of relief when she felt Charles hold onto her, she grabbed onto him as if her life depended on him. At that moment, she realized that Charles really loved her and was willing to sacrifice himself for her. If that wasn't love, what was that? Subconsciously, the two embraced each other tightly.

Charles stood up and grabbed her shoulder, "Sarah, Sarah, are you okay? Is the baby alright? How are you feeling?" he asked with extreme concern.

Seeing his pale face, Sarah finally felt how much he really loved her. She couldn't help but start to cry.

Seeing her cry, Charles became even more anxious and asked, "Did something happen to you? What is wrong? I'll take you to the hospital right away!"

Sarah shook her head and said, "I'm okay, just moved from what you just did. You saved my life. I didn't expect that you loved me that much. Charles, I never thought that you care about me that much!"

Charles paused for a while, he understood what she was saying. When he was about to say something, he suddenly felt a sharp pain in his spine and had to close his eyes.

Sarah steadied him as she felt that he was about to lose his balance, and asked with worry, “Charles, what’s wrong with you? What’s wrong?”

Charles tried to suppress his pain for a while until he finally answered in great pain, “It seems... my back... got hurt...”

Sarah asked him, “Where? Where does it hurt?” Touching his back with her hand along his spine, hoping that he was not injured there. Scared that he would be paralyzed, she suddenly started to scream loud for help, looking around desperately trying to find somebody.

“Is anybody here? Anyone? Please, we need help! Help me!”

Finally, the workers heard her and came running toward them. Since Charles was related to their employer, they were worried that if anything happened to him, they would be in trouble with their employer for the incident. They drove them to the hospital as fast as possible.

Because Charles seemed to be in great pain, the workers paid more attention to him and ignored Sarah as she appeared to be feeling okay. Sarah also was focused on Charles, disregarding her own discomfort. She helped them to get Charles into a car and drove with them to the hospital.

Once at the hospital, Charles kept insisting on the doctor to see Sarah first. Holding onto the doctor’s hand, he pleaded, “Doctor, see my wife first, doctor, please check my wife first!”

But the doctor disregarded his plea and answered, “Mr. Thomas, you are critically injured, your wife seems to be all right. You don’t need to worry about her, she will be taken care of by the nurses!”

Sarah also tried to calm him down and said, “I’m okay, Charles, really! Just let them take care of you first, don’t worry about me!”

But Charles couldn’t help worrying about her and kept insisting for her to be seen before him until the door to the emergency room closed and he pleaded couldn’t be

heard any longer. Once the door was locked, Sarah was standing on the outside of the room in a silent hallway, and slowly started to come back to her own reality.

She felt so relieved that Charles was finally attended to, but as she relaxed her stressful body, she started to feel tremendous pain in her stomach. It felt like something was tugging at her stomach, and as if her insides were to fall out anytime. She covered her stomach with both hands and slid slowly to the ground, leaning against the wall.

Everyone started to look at her in surprise, and the nurses came running to help her, shouting. “Mrs. Thomas, Mrs. Thomas!”

Sarah’s face was pale as she curled up in agonizing pain, she could barely speak. Suddenly she noticed that blood was running down her leg. Although it was not much blood, it was bright red, shocking her to the core. She froze at realizing what was happening, staring down on her legs with eyes wide open.

One of the female doctors glanced at her and immediately knew what was going on. She jumped up and shouted, “Oh my god, are you pregnant? Why didn’t nobody tell me that she’s pregnant? Nurses, quick, prepare the room! She is having a miscarriage. Hurry up!”

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Helping Sarah to walk into the procedure room, the doctor continued shouting and swearing at the farmworkers for neglecting a pregnant woman and not informing anyone of the fact that she was pregnant.

All Sarah could hear was the chaotic sound of people rushing around her, shouting, and trying to help her as she gradually lost consciousness. She shuddered in pain as the blurred vision turned black.

Subconsciously, she still felt something tugging at her stomach, and all she could think of was her unborn child. “My baby... baby... baby...”

She cried out for help, but no one seemed to hear her. Trying to hold onto something, the only thing she could find was a nurse’s hand who was trying to console her and placing an IV into her arm. Several doctors were gathered around

her, checking her and trying to save her baby. Despite all their efforts, she kept feeling the pain, as if something was falling out of her body.

She wanted to shout, struggle, and protect her baby in her womb, but she couldn't do anything. The sense of loss was deepening. She didn't know what she would do if she lost her baby. What would she do? If their baby was gone. What would Charles do?

She couldn't think about it, she didn't want to lose her baby, "Charles, if we lose our baby... What will we do?" Sarah murmured intangibly.

They were so happy and looked forward to the baby's arrival...the whole Thomas family was waiting for the baby... what if she lost it?

What should she do?

If she lost the baby... What should she do?

If she lost the baby... What should she do?

Sarah finally fainted in pain and sadness, with the thought of losing her baby replaying in her mind endlessly.

Sarah had a long dream where she was with her baby, her parents, and her little sister. They were all together at an amusement park, playing games and having so much fun all together, and having a wonderful time together. She was happy and didn't know about sadness or pain because her parents were there to protect them from all harm.

She didn't need to work hard or feel sad... but then... a car accident ended all that happiness. She had to take over, take care of her little sister, suffer through life's unfair dealing with her. She vowed that if she had a child, she wouldn't let the child suffer, no matter what kind of family she would be in. She would not let her child follow the same path... she wanted her child to be born and to have a happy life.

But where was her baby?

She couldn't see it clearly. She heard him cry out to her, calling her, "Mom, Mom..." but she couldn't find him.

There was a thick fog, and she couldn't distinguish the people. She lost her way... She still heard her child, he was bullied by someone and cried out in pain... she heard the sound of a car stopping, then her child's flustered scream, "Mom... Mom..." Her child seemed to be standing in the middle of the road, pleading for help. But she still couldn't find him no matter where she went and how much she searched. She couldn't see him, only heard him cry and scream. "Mom... Mom..."

Sarah shouted in panic, "Baby... baby..."

But no matter how much she tried to scream or shout, she could barely make a sound.

She felt two hands holding her hands tightly.

The hands were warm, and there was a crying voice calling her name.

"Sarah... Sarah... wake up, Sarah..."

It still felt like a dream, but Sarah knew it was Charles's voice.

Charles was her beloved husband and father of her child. Why was he crying and calling her name? He was holding her hands tightly as if he was afraid of losing her.

Sarah slowly opened her eyes and saw the white walls and white sheets. There was a faint smell of disinfectant in the air. Was she in a hospital?

"Sarah, you woke up!" She heard his excited voice close to her ear. It was Charles's voice. She could understand him clearly.

She slowly turned around and saw Charles sitting beside her bed, holding her hand tightly. He looked pale, his beard had grown on his chin, and his eyes were red as if he hadn't had a rest for a long time, or had he been crying?

"Charles.....Why are you here?" She asked in surprise.

Charles seemed to cry with joy as he answered, "Everything is okay now, you wake up. I am okay as long as you're fine!"

Sarah wanted to laugh at him but only managed a slight smile. She asked with worry, "Are you okay? Your back..."

Charles kissed her hand and whispered, “I’m all right. I just took some medicine. Don’t worry, but you...”

Sarah suddenly remembered... she reached for her abdomen, which still felt a little painful. There was an IV attached to the back of her hand, with fluid dripping.

Suddenly, she started to wonder why she was in the hospital, lying in bed with an IV. Did something happen to her when she fell off her horse? Sarah looked at Charles and asked in bewilderment.

“Charles, what about my baby?”

“Is something wrong with my baby?”

“Why am I lying in this bed?”

“How about my baby?”

Seeing her nervous face, the faint smile on his face disappeared. He looked at her silently with complex emotion in his eyes. It seemed that the calm lake was stirred with waves caused by a hurricane, and the peace that had just been there having gone, blurring the vision of the horizon. He suddenly lowered his head.

Seeing his reaction, Sarah was even more worried. She grabbed Charles’s shoulder in a hurry and nervously asked.

“Charles, Charles, tell me! What’s wrong with our baby? Is... Is the baby okay?”

After a long time, Charles finally raised his head but looked away from her. He dared not to look into her eyes as he answered in a low voice, “Sarah...” his voice was stuck, he couldn’t continue.

Sarah looked at him, shaking his hands to wake him up from a trance, and shouted, “Tell me!”

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Christina and Emma walked suddenly into the room, and Christina said in a cold tone.

“Your baby is gone!”

They looked coldly at Sarah, and in a scolding tone, Christina continued. “You bring your misfortunes upon yourself!”

“Mom, how can you do this to Sarah? She just woke up, how can you say that?”

Charles stood up and stopped her, angry with his mother’s rude behaviors and hurtful words.

Sarah looked blankly at Christina. Her face turned pale. She shook her head and said in a barely audible voice.

“No, I don’t believe... I don’t believe you... You must be deceiving me... You must be playing with me!”

Then she looked at Charles, “Charles, is it true? It can’t be true, can it? Our baby is fine. She’s playing with me. She’s just scaring me, isn’t she? Charles.....Charles, am I right?”

Charles grabbed her shoulder to calm her down and said, “Sarah, calm down, calm down! Please!” He replied with deep sorrow in his eyes.

But the more he looked at Sarah, the sadder he became. She couldn’t believe it was true. She didn’t believe it. Crying out loud, she shouted.

“I don’t believe it. I don’t believe it! Our baby is still there. Charles. You tell me that our child is okay. Right? You tell me that my baby is fine!”

“Sarah... Sarah, calm down... Sarah!” Charles tried to control her, but Sarah kept struggling and shouting in desperation. Charles suddenly embraced her and held her tightly.

“Sarah, listen to me, whether we have a child or not, I will always love you, I will always be with you. Please come down. We will have another baby in the future... We will have children in the future...”

Charles was about to start to cry. They had both been looking forward to the birth of their first baby. Their baby had been their most precious possession, their fortune. His presence had brought them closer, kept them from fighting and separating, forcing them to reconcile when all had seemed lost.

They had been so excited about the birth of their baby, planning on how to raise him and take care of him. But now he was gone before he had the chance to come to this world. Now he would never come to this world, and they would never have an opportunity to meet him.

They both cried, especially Sarah. She started to beat Charles on his shoulder to vent her emotions. But no matter how sad she was, she couldn't bring her baby back!

Charles didn't say anything, only cried silently on her shoulder for a long time. Finally, he said.

“Sarah, I love you. We will have another baby in the future. Let him go, and don't be sad. I just want you to be healthy. You are the only one I care about now. Sarah... How much I care about you!”

They were holding each other and crying. Christina watched them and sneered while standing beside them, then signaled Emma to follow her outside.

Emma had mixed feelings in her heart. It was evident that Charles cared more about Sarah after losing their baby, and no matter what she did, Charles would not leave Sarah. Emma felt unwilling to accept it and felt terrible at the same time. Especially when Charles held Sarah and told her that he loved her, she envied Sarah and couldn't bear it.

Christina seemed to know what Emma was thinking, so after they closed the door behind them, she pulled Emma into a quiet corner and said, “What are you worrying about? This is just the beginning of our plan. Calm down!”

Emma looked up at her mother and became very frightened. She murmured, “Mom.....What else do you want to do?”

“Hum, what else do I have to do? Of course, I want Sarah to leave my son. I won't give up until they are separated.”

Emma didn't know what to say. She couldn't shake the feeling that they had done something terrible. Doubting, she said. “Sarah just had a miscarriage!”

Christina raised her eyebrows and asked ironically. “What? Have you developed a conscience?”

Emma was starting to feel afraid of her mother, so she just lowered her head and said, “No... No...”

“Come on! If you don’t cooperate with me, how can I separate Sarah from Charles? How could we take Charles back?”

Emma calmed down for a moment and then asked. “Mom, what are we going to do next?”

Christina stared at the sunshine outside and sneered. The golden sunset was reflected in her face and eyes, as if she was possessed by the devil, making Emma feel even more uncomfortable. After a few seconds. Christina sneered again and added.

“Hum, what are we going to do? Of course, it’s time to prepare for the most important move. This time, they must be separated. Anyone who dares to disobey me has no good ending, Sarah, you must lose!”

Sarah has been in a bad mood after the miscarriage. Although everyone advised her to relax, and even her sister had come from her school to stay with her for a while, she still couldn’t shake off her depression and sadness. Every time she remembered her baby, she felt regretful and blamed herself for what had happened.

She felt that if she hadn’t gone out with Charles and insisted on riding the horse, if she hadn’t been so stubborn and insisted that Charles answer his phone just so she could have a few minutes alone, things would be different... There were so many possibilities and assumptions of what they could have done differently, but none of those assumptions were going to bring her baby back.

It felt like there was a tight knot around her heart, making it impossible for her to think of feeling anything else. Even having another child in the future would never replace the baby she lost, her firstborn, her hope of a new beginning.

Charles was worried about seeing Sarah like this. Mourning the loss of his child and seeing Sarah having such a hard time made it even worse for him. Consumed by their sadness, they temporarily forgot about Mr. Thomas and how he was affected by the loss of his much-anticipated grandchild.



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Mr. Thomas was terminally ill, and his greatest wish was to see Charles well established professionally and personally, happily married and with a family before he passed away. He had been looking forward to the birth of his first grandchild. Knowing that Sarah was pregnant had given him hope. He had proudly told all his friends and acquaintances about the expected arrival of his grandson, but none of them knew that Sarah had suffered a miscarriage.

His hopes and dreams had vanished. How could his weak heart suffer so much pain?

When he first heard the news of Sarah's miscarriage, Mr. Thomas fell into a coma, and the doctors had to use every available means to bring him back, but even after he woke up, his mental state was just as worrisome as his physical as he was becoming less and less hopeful with every day that passed.

Sarah felt sorry for Mr. Thomas and was afraid to visit him. Not daring to go into his room, she only looked at him from the door while he was asleep. She was worried that he would be sad when seeing her, which could deteriorate his health even further.

What she didn't know was that Mr. Thomas wanted to see her and questioned why she kept avoiding him all these days. When Charles told Sarah about it, she felt nervous. Looking down to avoid looking into Charles's eyes, she clutched the sheet off her bed tightly with her fists.

"Are you sure he really wants to see me?" She asked after a long silence.

Seeing how distressed Sarah was, Charles held her shoulders to comfort and encourage her. Exhaling a massive sigh, he said, "My dad... You know... He has always loved you and knows you, so..."

"You should go see him. You can't keep away from him forever..."

"Besides.....I don't know how much longer he will be with us... he is very ill..."

"Stop!" Sarah suddenly interrupted him in a low voice, as if she was unwilling to hear the rest. She knew that Mr. Thomas was terminally ill, but she couldn't bear the thought of it and refused to listen to those words spoken out loud.

Charles remained silent for a while, then continued to encourage her to go see him. “Go and talk to him; he really wants to talk to you.”

Sarah thought for a moment before she nodded in agreement, grasping the sheet with all her force out of nervousness.

Not until Charles took her hand to help her get up did she move. As they walked out of their room, the housekeeper came running towards them, yelling. “Something has happened, Mr. Thomas... Mr. Thomas, something is wrong with him!”

Sarah and Charles were shocked and asked in unison. “What’s the matter?”

The housekeeper replied anxiously, “I don’t know. Just now, he asked me to go upstairs and ask you to bring him to the hospital. Mrs. Thomas and Emma had already taken him to the hospital in a big hurry. Mrs. Thomas told me that you are to catch up with them quickly!”

Sarah looked at Charles. “Charles, what’s wrong with your dad? Hurry up! Hurry up! We have to go to the hospital right away!”

Charles nodded and responded to the housekeeper. “Yes, we got it!” Then they went downstairs and ran to the garage into their car and drove off. Charles drove as fast as he could all the way to the hospital without stopping.

While in the car and driving, Charles’s phone rang. Since he couldn’t answer while driving at high speed, he gave it to Sarah to answer. Sarah picked the phone and looked at the call display, and saw that it was Christina calling. She looked hesitant at Charles and said. “It’s... it’s your mom!”

Charles understood and said, “Give me the earplugs, and I’ll talk to her from there.”

Sarah plugged in the earphones and gave them to Charles.

Charles answered the phone, and after the initial “hello,” he only responded with a simple “yes” in a very serious tone. Sarah had never seen Charles’s face so emotional. She didn’t know what they were talking about, but the look on Charles’s face made her very worried. Finally, when he hung up the phone, she asked. “Charles, did she tell you anything about dad, how is he?”

“He suffered another heart attack and is in shock. They are at the hospital emergency department. He is being attended by a group of specialists at the moment, but... my mom said he is very critical and that she doesn't know if he's going to make it this time.” Charles's tone was solemn and filled with sadness.

Sarah had started crying even before he finished speaking. Covering her mouth with her hand, she said, “It's all my fault. It's me ! If I hadn't climbed on that horse, to begin with... if I hadn't been so stubborn... I wouldn't have lost my baby, and your dad wouldn't be so sick right now.

If something happened to your dad...”

Charles grabbed her hand tightly. “Don't blame yourself. It's not your fault. I was wrong, too. I shouldn't have taken you there to ride horses. I shouldn't have left you to answer the phone. There are lots of things I shouldn't have to... don't blame yourself. Now, dad is very sick, and I don't want to see any accident happen to you again. I've lost one of you, I couldn't bear losing you too. You have to stay safe.”

His eyes turned red, and tears were about to roll out as he closed his lips tightly and kept silent.

Sarah was crying, covering her mouth and shaking her head.

Emerged in their sadness, they arrived at the hospital and rushed to the emergency room. To their surprise, the door to his room was not closed as usual, but wide open. A group of doctors came out of the ward. Christina and Emma went into the room in a hurry.

Christina asked the lead doctor. “Doctor, how is my husband?”

Charles and Sarah walked to them. The doctor looked at them with a severe face, sighed, and lowered his head. After a while, he said, “I'm sorry, we've done everything we could. There is nothing left we can do except provide some comfort... We can't resist nature, his hours' count... We've really done our best. I'm sorry!”

“What did you say?” Christina wept hopelessly.

The doctor repeated. “You better go in and see him. This may be your last chance to talk to him!”

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Christina almost fainted. Fortunately, this time there were nurses close by to steady her and prevent her from falling. She cried out loud and hurried towards her husband.

Emma also cried, “Dad... Dad...” As she runs toward his bedside.

Charles and Sarah followed them quietly. All four were standing around Mr. Thomas’s bed, looking at him and crying. He was wearing an oxygen mask and an IV drip on his right hand, his eyes closed, and his face was pale as if he was already gone.

Together, they managed to wake him up with some effort. He opened his eyes slightly and glanced at them, slowly moving his eyes from one to another. From his expression, it seemed that his eyes were blurred and that he couldn’t see them clearly.

Sarah couldn’t contain herself and started to cry out loud, hardly able to keep standing still. Charles had to hold her to prevent her from falling. She remembered when her father had died back when she was only 13, and she and her sister had been standing at his bedside, just like they were now, and watched as her father passed away.

No matter how hard she had shouted, her father hadn’t responded and left them alone. Sarah didn’t know how to express her feelings at this moment. Overcome from sadness, she was unwilling to see the second man who had loved her as a father die. Death was so cruel, and no matter how much money a person has, no one can escape its claws.

She had no choice but to watch her second father die too.

Christina and Emma were also sad. Despite their flaws, they both treated Mr. Thomas sincerely. Seeing how he was slowly nearing his last breath, they were very sad and wept. Christina cried until she couldn’t stand but crouched on the floor and kept calling her husband’s name, holding his hand in hers.

Mr. Thomas slowly raised his hand and pointed toward Sarah, looking longingly at her as if he still had a lot to say to her.

Sarah was surprised and hesitated for a moment. She looked at Charles for reassurance, but then she saw Christina and Emma also looking at her, and Christina said in a cold and dry tone. "Come here quickly, he's calling you!"

Sarah was sure Mr. Thomas was pointing at her, so she went closer and took his hand. Crying, she said. "Dad... dad... I'm here. Do you want to say something?"

Mr. Thomas responded through the oxygen mask, his speech was slurred and weak. Sarah could barely hear him and bent down closer to him. He still seemed to want to say something, but all Sarah could understand was. "I... don't blame you... your baby... it's not your fault...! With Charles... be ... happy."

Sarah burst into tears. When her father died, he also told her, "Take care of your sister... be happy," Just like Mr. Thomas was telling her now. She felt as if the string in her heart was cut, and she couldn't speak. She hardly managed to say in an unsteady voice, "Dad... dad... I promise... I'll stay with Charles... I will try my best..."

Mr. Thomas nodded slightly, then looked at Charles. Charles walked over to him, and his dad also told him something no one else was able to understand except his last sentence, "I... I'm so sorry!"

Charles was crying silently, and his eyes were red, but when he heard his final words, he collapsed and burst into tears. Sobbing, he said, "Dad, I don't blame you... I don't blame you anymore. You have compensated me for everything already!"

Charles was very sad. His father had been feeling guilty all this time, even while facing his death, he was still in remorse for not having treated him better. Charles felt sorry for him, he didn't know how many things his father had done over the years to compensate for his shortcoming. Charles had forgiven him, but his dad still felt guilty, apologizing even with his last breath. Charles was so moved by his father's love and couldn't stop crying.

Finally, Mr. Thomas looked toward Christina and Emma and signaled for both of them to come closer to him. Mr. Thomas gestures for Charles and Sarah to step out and give them a few minutes to speak privately.

Sarah and Charles stepped out and silently closed the door, leaving them for their final moment alone.

Standing outside, they wiped their tears. Sarah still was unable to calm down since the scene of her father passing away kept repeating in her mind over and over, making her feel as if she was losing him today all over again. The pain of losing her second father figure was too much for her to bear.

Charles held her and let her cry on his shoulder, comforting her. “It will be okay, Sarah. I will never leave you alone again!”

Sarah leaned against him and cried her heart out.

They stood outside, waiting for them to finish their talk for a long time. Finally, they heard Emma crying out loud, “Dad... dad.”

They knew immediately that something was going on with Mr. Thomas and rushed back into the room, where they saw him struggle as he took his last breath, oxygen mask removed. His eyes gradually turned white as his breath sounds diminished.

Emma was standing on the bedside, crying, and Christina was reacting strangely, hiding away and crying with her mouth covered, as if she felt too guilty to look at her husband. Even though she was crying desperately, she didn’t dare to look in his direction despite knowing that he was in pain.

Sarah and Charles hurried to him, calling out to him, and Charles also called the doctor. After a final examination, the doctor shook his head as he officially pronounced his death.

“What?” Charles shouted in despair.

Sarah felt numb. Loud crying and screaming were soon heard from the room as they were faced with the harsh reality of death.

Dead! Her second father, who had been so kind to her, had died in front of her. And the reason why he died was that he had been unable to bear the sad news of his grandchild, which had provoked another heart attack in him. Sarah didn’t know how to express what she was feeling. She felt pain and discomfort.

She felt as if all sense of color had vanished, leaving the world in black and white!



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The following days were gloomy. Outside, it was rainy, the weather was cold, and winter was approaching. Sarah felt terrible after everything that had happened recently. First, she had suffered a miscarriage, and then shortly after, Mr. Thomas had died, leaving her feeling empty and guilty from the inside.

Charles was worried about Sarah. Since there was no need for them to stay in Los Angeles anymore, he decided to move back to Houston even though he had inherited his father's company, but Sarah's health was more valuable to him than anything else.

After everything they had gone through, Charles had learned that once you lose a loved one, the clock can't be turned back. It's difficult to heal the wounds after losing a family member. There had been so many misunderstandings between him and Sarah, to a point where they had almost given up on each other. Fortunately, they had managed to save their marriage, and he had learned to love and cherish her. He knew that if he didn't smarten up toward Sarah, he wouldn't have another chance.

Because of the miscarriage and Mr. Thomas's passing, Sarah was in a very depressed mood. Christina was still the same and scolded her at every chance she got. Charles was afraid that Sarah wouldn't be able to bear it much longer and decided to give up the companies in Los Angeles and go back to Houston.

He hadn't discussed this with Sarah before making the decision, he just thought that they should go back to Houston. When he got the chance, he told his mother about his decision, who got really angry at this news.

Staring at Charles with fierce eyes, Christina accused him. "Was your father your only relative? What about Emma and me? Are you leaving us right after he left us? Charles, you really don't love us! Have you ever considered our feelings? We're still mourning your father's death, and you want to leave us now too? Why can't you stay here with us?"

Charles felt annoyed and helpless. Not wanting to argue, he tried to talk to her with a soft tone, "Mom, we've been staying with you for over a week after dad's burial, isn't that enough? I know you are sad, but why don't you think about Sarah? She first lost her baby and then watched my father die. She feels sad staying here and is depressed every day when faced with the memories. I don't think it's good for her to make her stay here for much longer."

Christina sneered, “I knew it! That wicked woman convinced you to leave us, right? Why can’t she stay here? We are. But why can’t she? Such selfishness! She never considers our feelings at all and only cares about herself!”

“Mom, how can you say that? Why don’t you like Sarah? What the hell did she do for you to hate her that much!” Charles stood up angrily.

“Charles, let her go. I don’t care what she said!” Sarah said in a cold tone as she slowly walked down the stairs, looking at Mrs. Thomas with a cold defiant expression, as if she was not willing to ever bow down to that woman again.

With an indifferent tone, she continued. “She has always disliked me anyway, so no matter what I do, it will never be good enough, right? Why ask for advice?”

“Sarah, are you crazy? You dare to talk to me, your mother-in-law, like that?” Christina retaliated.

Sarah remained calm, looking at Christina with sharp eyes as if she wanted to rip her heart out! “I have tolerated you this long because you are my mother-in-law, but after all the times you framed me up and created problems between Charles and me, I had lost respect for you a long time ago. You do not deserve my respect!

“Maybe you should ask yourself why I should keep tolerating you and consider your feelings. Until now, I tolerated you because of Mr. Thomas. I’ve always respected and appreciated him, he was a man worthy of respect. He was a family-oriented man and wanted a harmonious family, so I’ve been patient this long for him despite everything you did to me without resisting. But despite everything, I couldn’t save Mr. Thomas’s life. Are you happy now that he died?”

Christina was furious. “What do you mean? Aren’t you the reason why he died? Why are you blaming me now? Don’t you see how ridiculous you are, Sarah?”

Sarah looked at her pitifully as if she were looking at a wretch. “Christina, Mr. Thomas was so sad after my miscarriage, which caused him to have a heart attack. But don’t forget why I had a miscarriage!

“Since we’re at it, tell me why that sneaky man was waving a flag, calling my horse, and provoking it to run away that day at the farm?”

“Why were there firecrackers on the ground in that exact same spot? Do you think their staff placed it there? How could such a luxurious manor employ such irresponsible staff?”

“Christina, can you swear that you have nothing to do with it?”

Charles was listening to Sarah with his eyes wide open in surprise, and then asked,

“Sarah, what are you saying? Did you know about it? What do you mean?”

Christina was also shocked. She suddenly looked at Sarah with a guilty look but was speechless.

Sarah looked at Charles and sneered, “Why don’t you ask your mother?”

Then she turned back to Christina, looking at her with incredible eyes, “Christina, I always knew that you don’t like me, but I thought you only mean to me, and I didn’t expect you to be evil enough to kill your own grandchild. Did you ever consider that it was your own grandchild when you did that?”

“Why do you hate me so much that you are willing to kill your own grandchild?”

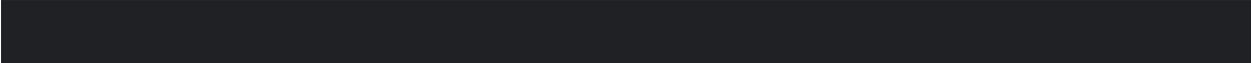
“Did you ever think that you were committing a crime by killing your own family member, and subsequently killing your own husband?”

“Christina, you are brutal, unforgivable!”

“Are you comfortable now?”

“Can you sleep well?”

“Nonsense! You are throwing mud at me now to save yourself. What makes you say that I did it?” Christina finally shouted, glaring at Sarah with anger.



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Sarah sneered, “Can you swear it’s only my fault and that you have nothing to do with it? Christina, even though you have a good reputation in Los Angeles, you

can't hide after the bad things you have done now. If you can employ a detective, then why can't I?"

Charles finally came up toward Sarah and took her hand. "Sarah, did you hire an investigator? What evidence do you have? Did my mom really have something to do with it?"

"Charles, I'm your mother. I gave life to you and raised you. Even if you're ungrateful, you couldn't listen to this envious woman trying to blame me for her mistakes!" Christina yelled at Charles.

But Charles just turned around coldly and said, "I don't believe anyone. I only believe the evidence. If Sarah has evidence, I will trust her. If not, I don't believe anyone blindly!"

He turned to Sarah and asked. "Sarah, do you have any evidence?"

"Well, of course, I have evidence, I'll show you later. Now I want to know what you think!" Sarah stared at Christina coldly.

Christina suddenly felt guilty and couldn't respond, but Emma, who was standing behind her, suddenly gathered her courage and responded on her mother's behalf.

"Sarah, are you threatening my mom now? Your words are empty, you have no evidence. If you have evidence, show it to us. Whom are you trying to scare?"

Sarah looked at Emma and sneered, "Emma, are you trying to get to me before I get even with you too? Don't you remember what you did with your mom? Do you want me to expose you too before you are satisfied?"

"Shut up!" Emma walked toward Sarah and slapped her, but Sarah wasn't about to put up with it this time. She immediately grabbed Emma's hand, staring at her coldly, and hit her back even harder.

Emma was surprised and in pain from the slap. Covering her face, she looked at Sarah with an incredulous look, as if she couldn't believe that Sarah had slapped her back in front of Charles.

Sarah said coldly, "Emma, I only give you what you deserve! You and your mom have always bullied me, intending to destroy my family! The slap is too light for all the evil things you've done!"

Emma was stimulated and cried out hypocritically. “Brother, this bitch is bullying mom and me. Why do you keep silent? Brother, you cared so much about me when I was a child, but now you stand there and just watch as this bitch slaps me!

“How dare she slap me?”

“You should stand up for me!”

Christina had recovered from her initial shock and shouted to Sarah, “Sarah, you’ve gone too far! First, you blame me, and then you slap Emma. Do you even have any feelings for the Thomas family in your heart?”

“What about your mother-in-law and sister-in-law!”

“Christina, you are shameless! After everything you have done to me, including killing my baby and Mrs. Thomas, whatever I do is within reason. Besides, today is the last time I will ever talk to you. If you continue to be mean to me, we will never see each other again, no matter what happens to Charles and me. You can’t bully me anymore!”

After Sarah was finished yelling at Christina, she walked out without hesitating, as if she was leaving this place of her nightmares behind forever. As she walked out, she burst into tears. In the end, she had failed to live up to Mr. Thomas’s expectations and hadn’t been able to maintain this family. She couldn’t stand Christina and her troubles any longer. Why should she yield to and forgive the one who had killed both her unborn baby and her second father?”

Emma and Christina were screaming, pressuring Charles to take their side, but Charles ignored them and instead went after Sarah and yelled,

“Sarah... Sarah... ”

He found Sarah sitting in the car and crying. Charles was stunned and went forward. He put his hand carefully on her shoulder and tried to say something, but remained quiet and just sighed.

Sarah suddenly looked up at him with tears. “Do you think I went too far?”

Charles shook his head and said, “I know you’re sad, and I know you’ve suffered a lot. You must be very depressed today to reach your breaking point! I don’t blame you!”

Sarah embraced him and cried, “Thank you, thank you for forgiving me. I can’t stay here right now. All I want is to leave. Would you take me away? I really don’t want to see them again. Every time I see them I remember the death of our baby and father-in-law!”

Charles nodded, “Okay, I’ll take you. I’ll take you wherever you want to go!” He went into the car and drove off.

Sarah finally felt a little comfort and satisfaction. Fortunately, at the last moment, Charles had chosen to support her and stand by her.

At last, they drove away from the house that had made them so sad.

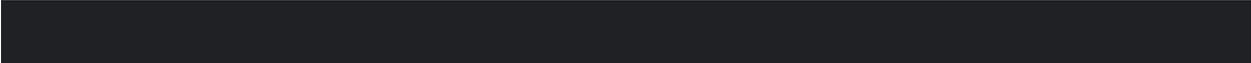
Once on the road, Sarah suddenly said, “I want to go to the horse track again. There is some evidence I haven’t gotten, and I want to get!”

Charles remembered and asked, “Yes, you said you had evidence. What evidence do you have?”

“A witness! Come with me and let’s talk to the staff. Can you ask them carefully whether there was a person who came in with an unusual reason after they cleaned the farm that day? And then, I follow this clue to investigate. I got some evidence. It’s amazing!” Sarah sneered. She seemed very hurt.

Charles knew why she was laughing, but he didn’t say anything, just went to the farm in silence.

They drove out of the city and went through a forest to the suburbs. While turning around a corner, a minibus suddenly appeared in front of them. Trying to find out where it had come from as they both hadn’t seen it approaching, their car almost got hit by them. Charles yelled out and stomped on the brakes immediately. Sarah also noticed the near hit and stared at the car in front of them.



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Fortunately, Charles’s car was new with a powerful engine, stopping at a very short distance, preventing them from crashing.

The two cars nearly hit, almost like a warning. Both Sarah and Charles were startled and broke out in a cold sweat.

Charles got out of the car to ask the driver what happened, but before he reached the vehicle, a group of strong men, masked with black stockings, rushed out of the woods, and one of them hit Charles on the back of the head with something heavy. Charles fainted immediately.

Sarah had been watching them and yelled, “Charles!” and was about to get off to help him when one of the masked men opened the car and pulled her out. Sarah finally understood what was going on. Trying to resist, she firmly grasped onto the car, struggling, as she asked, “Who are you? What are you doing? You are breaking the law, let me go, let me go!”

But her struggles were useless as the men were much stronger than her and pulled her out of the car with ease. Before she could do anything, her mouth and nose were covered with a clot, and she fainted after screaming wildly. Once she was out, one of the men carried her on his shoulder to the minibus opposite the road.

The next thing Sarah knew, someone was pouring a basin of water on her to wake her up. In this cold winter, the basin of water felt like a piercing blade itching on her body, causing her pain. She tried hard to open her eyes to look around but could only see a few strange fat men standing in front of her and staring at her indifferently.

She was tied onto a pillar in what seemed to be an abandoned warehouse.

Sarah immediately remembered what had happened and knew she had been kidnapped. Fearful, she stared at the men. “Who are you? What are you going to do?”

“Hum! You don’t need to know who we are!” One of them sneered at her.

“Why are you kidnapping me, you criminals?” Sarah shouted out.

“Hum, do you think people like us are afraid of being called criminals?” One man, who seemed to be the leader of them, sneered, holding a knife in his hand. The knife looked very sharp and frightened, Sarah.

Sarah had been staring at the knife the whole time. Although she was very frightened and nervous, she clenched her fist and tried to keep calm. At this time,

she must not act rashly. She must calm down and think of ways to escape or to deal with them. After calming down, Sarah asked, “What did you do to Charles? Where is he?”

“You’re kidnapped and tied up in an abundant warehouse, and you ask about your man before yourself? Aha-ha-ha-ha-ha!” The leader laughed ironically.

Sarah didn’t know what he meant and was afraid that something might happen to Charles from the way he got hit before she was kidnapped. She shouted again.

“What on earth did you do to Charles?”

“Aha-ha-ha-ha-ha-ha...” They all burst into laughter, looking at her ironically. One of them finally said, “Such a fool! But does Charles love her? Aha-ha-ha-ha-ha-hah...”

“What do you mean?” Sarah stared at them, coldly.

“Hum, what do we mean? You will know soon enough how silly you really are!”

“Why did you kidnap me for money? Or did someone hire you for this? Who hired you?” Sarah questioned them coldly as she became more and more skeptical about their intentions. If they were just ordinary kidnapers, the only thing that would want was money. Given that Charles was a wealthy businessman, it was a possibility.

However, so far, nobody had spoken about money, but mentioned her relationship with Charles, mocking her that Charles didn’t love her, trying to make her doubt him. What they really wanted was to alienate her from Charles. She couldn’t help doubting their intentions. If Christina had hired these men to kidnap her, she was really the devil itself.

Hearing Sarah questioning them, the man with the knife came up and slapped her fiercely in her face. “Bitch! Stop asking questions, or I will carve your face up!”

The man standing beside him smiled insidiously and said, “There’s no need to carve up her face, we might as well rape her and have a little fun, Aha-ha-ha-ha-ha-ha!”

Sarah’s face ached, it was red and swollen from the hit, but that didn’t compare with the nausea she felt in her heart. She felt these people were nauseous, but the

one who ordered them was even more disgusting. That woman was a mad lunatic, using unscrupulous means to achieve her goal.

The man with a knife squatted down and pinched her chin as he said in a fierce voice. “Phew! Your face is red and swollen, try to seduce the man now!”

Sarah stared at him, coldly and spat on his face in disgust.

The man hadn’t expected Sarah’s reaction and pulled a tissue from his pocket to wipe his face before he turned to hit her again, this time on the other cheek. Her whole face was all red and swollen now, but he still wasn’t done and kept pushing her neck against the pillar as if he was going to strangle her. He raised his knife and shouted, “You bitch! Do you think I won’t kill you? I can kill you right now!”

Sarah remained stubborn and responded with a sneer, “You dare not kill me because of your master, doesn’t she want me to see a play? If you kill me, who will pay you?”

By the look of his expression, Sarah seemed to be right. Disgruntled to have been found out so easily, he glared at her, “I may not kill you, but I can disfigure your face. If you dare to respond, I’ll do it right now!”

Sarah closed her eyes and kept silent. There was no point in arguing with these people, and she didn’t want to see the knife in front of her. She was scared that she would lose her mind and wouldn’t be able to calm herself down with the knife in front of her.

