



The Pucking Single Dad (Vancouver Heat #1)

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Category: Sport

Description: It started with a gorgeous hockey player saving me from a bad date...

And ended with the hottest night of my life.

Hunter was my knight in ice skates.

Tall, dark, and wickedly handsome.

He made every fantasy come true...

Right before he disappeared with the morning light.

I told myself it was a one-night thing.

But fate had other plans...

The perfect stranger from that night?

Turns out he's the hottest hockey player in the nation.

A grumpy single dad.

And now I'm his nanny.

Taking care of his adorable little boy is easy...

But resisting this rugged hockey player might be the hardest job of all.

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“Don't be a bitch!”

What the fuck did he just say? Those were not the words you want to hear from someone who was late and to a blind date at that. What a stupid jerk.

Luna glanced at her phone. Her date was ten minutes late, and the evening wasn't shaping up as she had hoped. After a tough day at work, she had been looking forward to a break from reality. Instead, the night was quickly turning into another disappointment.

Luna had just lost her job, although 'fired' wasn't quite the proper term. She hadn't been fired because she was awful at it.; she had done her job very well. But every nanny's greatest fear had finally come true: the children had grown up and no longer needed a nanny.

Luna had made a solid promise to herself when she first became a nanny. She vowed never to become too attached to the children in her care. After all, they were not her own. But despite her best intentions, she couldn't help herself; she loved those children as if they were her own.

So when the time came for her to let them go and watch them step into their teenage years, it felt like a dagger to her heart. She doubted she would see them again, and soon, she would need to find a new job with a new family. It wouldn't be long before she had to form attachments to another family, only to leave them behind in due time.

Thankfully, she had glowing recommendations, and the family was kind enough to give her a generous bonus. For now, money wasn't an issue, allowing her to focus on

her personal life for a little while.

Luna looked down at her phone once more. Her date was now twenty minutes late. Annoyed, she drank the last of her red wine and signaled the bartender for a refill. If her date was going to be late — or worse, or even possibly a no-show — she might as well enjoy a nice buzz. Just as the bartender returned with her second glass, Luna felt a hand gently touch her shoulder.

“Luna?” the man asked. “It’s me, Tony. I am so sorry I am late. Traffic was horrible, and I had the hardest time flagging down a cab.”

Luna looked up at Tony. He seemed nice, but he was still twenty minutes late. She hated having her time wasted. She considered getting up and leaving but ultimately decided to stay.

“Traffic in the city can be horrible,” Luna said with a slight smile.

She was forcing kindness, but a part of her felt obligated to stay and continue the date.

“Can I get you a drink?” Tony asked nervously.

Luna lifted her newly filled glass of red wine. Tony nodded foolishly.

“I decided to go ahead and get started without you since you were so late,” Luna said with a hint of anger in her voice.

“I better catch up with you then,” Tony said.

He looked around sheepishly for the bartender and flagged him down with his index finger.

“Hey man, could I have a whiskey-coke?” he asked. “Make that a double, please. I have to get on the same playing field as this lady.”

Luna laughed to herself. There was no way he would ever be on the same playing field. This date would be one and done. It was easy to tell there was no chemistry, but what the hell? She had nothing better to do. Plus, she needed to let off some steam after the horrible, emotional day she had.

They began talking about mundane things. Where they grew up, what brought them to the city, and what they each did for a living, were all topics of conversation they discussed. They were the necessary icebreakers for a first date, but Luna also thought these icebreakers were incredibly boring.

She wanted to meet someone with adventure and charisma. Where was that type of guy in the city? For such a populated area, Luna felt she had a hard time meeting men of a decent caliber and did not think her standards were high.

“Well, my business brought me into the city,” Tony stated proudly. “The restaurant business is booming here, as I am sure you know. There are so many great places to eat, but I have to say, my restaurant is the best. Do you like Italian food?”

Luna started to answer what she thought was a question, but she was interrupted by Tony.

“You must love Italian food. Everyone loves Italian food! It is the best. I mean, pasta and pizza, who doesn’t love that? All of our dough is made fresh and by hand, none of that fake shit. I mean, we make real Italian dishes. Have you ever been to Gino’s on 5 th Street?”

Again, Luna began to answer Tony’s question, only to be interrupted by him again. She began to think he just loved the sound of his own voice. First, he was late to their

date, and now, he would not let her get a word in.

Luna chugged her wine, and before she could place another order, the bartender set a fresh glass of red wine in front of her. She looked at him with a smile. He had to realize she was stuck on a terrible date. She appreciated his pity, even if it was unwarranted. It was clear to everyone but Tony – that this date was heading nowhere good.

“Well, if you haven’t been to Gino’s, do not bother going,” Tony coolly stated. “The dough is never good. The food never has any seasoning to it. It is not worth the trip, the money, or the time. I mean, who likes having their time wasted?”

This time, Luna got a word in. She was many glasses deep into the night.

“Well, I certainly do not like having my time wasted,” she confidently stated. “That is why, honestly, I was upset you were so late to our date.”

Tony’s demeanor changed. His chest became more pronounced as he placed his shoulders back.

“Well, I told you that traffic was bad,” Tony stated defensively. “I couldn’t get a cab. I had a long, long day. What do you want me to do?”

He shrugged his shoulders and downed his whiskey and Coca-Cola. He flagged the bartender for another one.

“I mean, it is not like you are so fantastic anyways,” Tony said. “You have barely said a word all night.”

It was obvious that Tony was getting drunk. He could not handle his alcohol, and the situation was causing him to get mouthy.

“You haven’t let me get a word in!” Luna exclaimed.

“Hey,” Tony said with his hands up in the air. “Don’t be a bitch!”

Luna was dumbfounded. She did not know what to do or say. Suddenly, she felt someone behind her.

“Is there any problem here?” a man asked.

Luna glanced over her shoulder and spotted a tall, handsome man stepping in to intervene.

“I asked if there was any problem,” the mysterious man said again.

The unknown man looked directly at Tony. Tony shrunk back into his seat. It was apparent he was afraid. The other guy was twice his size. He could see that he worked out and was in better shape than him. Tony felt embarrassed.

“No, no,” Tony stuttered. “There, there is no problem here.”

“It seems like there is a problem, though,” the mysterious man calmly said. “I think it’s time for you to go.”

Tony looked down at his newly filled drink.

“I haven’t finished my drink,” Tony shyly said. “Plus, I haven’t paid my bill.”

The muscular man approached Tony, leaned down to grab his drink, and downed it in one gulp.

“There,” he coolly stated. “Now, your drink is finished.”

The mysterious man reached into his back pocket and pulled out his wallet. He forcefully threw a one-hundred-dollar bill on the bar.

“And now, your bill is paid,” the unknown man said. “Now, you’re good to go. Have a great night. Come again. Bye.”

Tony knew it was time to go. He had gotten on the wrong man’s bad side. He was in no position physically to fight. He thought it was best to just leave. Tony didn’t even bother saying goodbye to Luna.

That date was over, anyway. There was no future there. He grabbed his belongings and stumbled out the door of the bar.

The mysterious man took a seat in Tony’s now-empty spot, drawing Luna's gaze. She couldn’t help but stare; the man who had just rescued her from the worst date of her life was strikingly handsome. His chiseled features and confident demeanor made her heart race, and she felt a blush creeping across her cheeks at the sight of him.

“Umm, thank you. Thank you very much,” Luna said nervously. “What is your name so I can properly thank you?”

The unknown man smiled. He was modestly dressed and wore a crew neck, a blue sweater, a nice pair of jeans without holes, and a baseball cap. His style was simple but controlled. Luna smiled again.

“My name is Hunter,” he said.

“Well, thank you, Hunter,” she said shyly. “Thank you very much for intervening. My name is Luna.”

The two reached out and clasped hands, their grips firm and confident. Hunter's large

hand enveloped Luna's, leaving her both impressed and slightly overwhelmed. The strength of his handshake sent a jolt through her, causing her to squirm in her seat as a mix of nervousness and intrigue washed over her.

“Let me buy you a drink,” Luna said. “It is the least I can do for you.”

Hunter nodded. He couldn't help but stare at her. She wore a red dress with a low v-cut. She looked mesmerizing, and her body looked as if it was begging to be touched.

“What do you drink?” she asked after she flagged down the bartender.

“I will have an old-fashioned,” Hunter stated.

The bartender brought him his drink and the two toasted together. They both stayed silent for a bit while they drank. There was tension in the air, the good kind. The kind of tension that can only be settled in the bedroom. Hunter finally decided to break the silence. He needed to know more about Luna.

“I couldn't just stand there while he called you a vulgar name,” Hunter said. “A woman should never be talked to like that.”

“I appreciate it,” Luna said. “Like I said earlier, you did me a great favor. That date wasn't going anywhere, anyways.”

“What?” Hunter curiously asked. “You don't like being constantly interrupted?”

Luna laughed out loud. Hunter stared at her. She had a beautiful smile and full lips. For a moment, he wondered what it would be like to kiss her.

“Were you watching us?” she enthusiastically asked.

“Well, it was kind of hard not to notice,” Hunter said. “The guy was loud, and I couldn’t help but hear the conversation, well, his conversation. He didn’t seem too interested in what you had to say, but I, on the other hand, could not be more intrigued by you.”

Luna blushed again. She hesitated for a moment. She debated whether or not to say what she wanted to. It was obvious there was chemistry between them, but she did not want to say something that would scare this handsome man away.

“So,” Luna stated. “Were you watching that disastrous of a date, or were you simply watching me?”

Hunter smiled. His pearly white teeth shined. The sight of him made Luna squirm in her seat again.

“You were definitely my focus,” Hunter stated boldly. “I couldn’t help but stare at you. You’re beautiful. I noticed you before he even approached. I debated introducing myself to you sooner, but I thought there was no way someone like you wasn’t already with someone.”

Luna pursed her lips together. Hunter was so attractive. He was so polite and in control. She wondered what it took to make him go wild with her.

“Well,” she started to say. “Well, I am very much available, especially after you got rid of that loser for me.”

Hunter took Luna's hand, and a warm sensation rippled through her entire body. Heat rushed to her cheeks as they locked eyes, exchanging smiles that seemed to hold an unspoken connection.

“Hey,” Hunter said. “Do you want to get out of here?”

Luna licked her lips and eyed Hunter up and down.

“More than you know,” she said with a smile.

Hunter grabbed Luna’s jacket and gently placed it around her shoulders. He left another one-hundred-dollar bill on the bar for their tab. It was more than enough to cover the cost of their drinks and a generous tip for the bartender. It was obvious that Hunter was wealthy and giving.

These qualities created a delightful blend of romance as the two strolled out of the bar hand in hand, with the city lights beckoning them. Luna felt an exhilarating blend of adventure and safety as they walked down the street. There was something undeniably enticing about Hunter.

Sure, he was handsome, but it was his willingness to rescue her from the worst date of her life that made her view him as a protector. Nothing was more attractive than someone who wanted to take care of her, especially after spending her entire career caring for others. For once, she yearned to be the one who was cared for.

The pair walked by a nightclub. Usually, she wouldn’t be interested in dancing, but tonight was different.

“Would you want to dance with me?” Luna asked seductively.

Hunter didn’t verbally respond to her. He just grabbed her hand and took her inside the nightclub. He walked right past the line to get in. Everyone in line stared at him as he walked by. For a moment, she thought it was strange, but then again, Hunter did have a strong presence surrounding him.

The bodyguards didn’t even stop him. It was almost as if they knew who he was. Luna also thought this was strange, but she was too focused on getting to dance with

Hunter. She wanted nothing more than a reason to get closer to him.

The couple walked into the club and traveled straight to the dance floor. The loud music serenaded them as their bodies began to dance. Hunter couldn't help but stare at Luna. The way she moved made him think about other ways they could dance together.

Her breasts subtly bounced in her red-hot dress as she moved her hips side to side. Her long hair flew through the air as she let her body lose control. Hunter wanted to lose control, too.

Hunter started moving closer to her. He grabbed her hips and pulled her closer. Their bodies moved rhythmically to the music. They were both transfixed on each other. To them, there was no one else in the room. They saw only each other. Hunter reached up and moved a piece of Luna's hair out of her face. Their bodies were sweaty from dancing, and the sweet scent of sweat only drew them closer to each other.

Hunter placed his hand on Luna's chin. He gently lifted her mouth to his. Hunter had been thinking about what it would be like to kiss her since the moment he saw her. The moment finally happened. It all felt so effortless.

Luna wrapped her arms around Hunter's neck. The two passionately kissed on the dance floor. It was clear that their night was far from over. The night was only beginning, and they would be spending the entire night together.

It was hard for them to keep their hands off each other. They soon realized they needed to leave the, unless they wanted to attract an even larger audience.

“Will you come home with me?” , Hunter passionately asked.

Luna nodded. She kissed him again and then grabbed his hand.

“Lead the way,” she said with a smile.

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When they arrived at Hunter's apartment building, Luna couldn't believe how her night had turned around. She had experienced both the best and worst dates of her life, all in one evening. What a night! With the past behind her, she felt a thrill of excitement for what was to come. Love was in the air, and she wanted to be nowhere but with Hunter.

As the couple stepped into the building and quickly entered the elevator, the doors closed behind them. Hunter pulled Luna into his arms, holding her tightly enough that they could feel each other's warmth as he kissed her passionately. He couldn't seem to get enough of her.

"I want you so badly," he said to her with passion. "Please, tell me that you want me, too."

Luna pressed her body against his, feeling the size of his dick against her. The heat between them was intense, a fire that ignited her desire. There was no denying that she wanted him just as much as he wanted her.

"I can't get you close enough," she gasped between breaths.

They continued to kiss. When the elevator doors opened, Hunter picked Luna up and she wrapped her legs around his waist as he carried her to his apartment door. As soon as he unlocked the entrance door, the two began taking their clothes off one another. They could not undress fast enough. They needed to feel each other's skin against one another. Neither of them had felt like this about someone before. It was intoxicating.

By the time both of them were naked, Hunter gently led Luna to his bedroom.

“Lay down,” Hunter said gently to Luna. “Let me make you feel good.”

Luna bit her lip, longing for Hunter to be inside her. She ached for a sweet release, convinced that only he could provide it. She lay back on the bed, waiting for him to make his next move. Hunter began by kissing every inch of her body, his mouth exploring her skin from head to toe. He started with her forehead, then kissed each of her cheeks before moving down to her shoulders. When he reached her breasts, his kisses turned into gentle sucking, eliciting soft gasps from her as he lavished attention on her nipples. Luna tilted her head back, lost in the sensation of his mouth on her body.

Hunter continued his descent, kissing her stomach, then her thighs, between her legs and toes. Each touch electrified her, and when he finally reached her core, Luna ran her fingers through Hunter’s hair, urging him on. His mouth was a work of art and he instinctively knew how to please her. While many men might struggle to find the clitoris, Hunter didn’t need any guidance— he was a master of oral pleasure. She surrendered to his skill, feeling nothing but pure ecstasy as the pressure inside her began to build.

Her moans grew louder as Hunter combined his hands with his tongue, licking her clit while sliding his fingers inside her. It felt as though he understood her body better than she did. Hearing her moan again delighted him. He thrived on knowing he was bringing her pleasure. All he wanted was to please her.

“That’s it,” he seductively said to her. “Let it go for me, baby. I want to make you cum.”

Luna moaned, and the sound pushed her over the edge. There was something about his words urging her to cum that made her lose all control.

At that moment, she experienced the sweetest release of her life, ecstasy coursing through her veins. Her toes curled as waves of pleasure washed over her. Hunter looked up at her, a satisfied smile spreading across his face.

“That’s it, baby,” Hunter said. “Now, it’s my turn to cum.”

Luna was as eager to please him, just as he was to please her. She pulled him on top of her and then rolled him over in the bed. She sat on top of him and placed his penis inside her. Hunter was in awe of her body and how she took control of the situation. She moved her body back and forth slowly at first and then faster and faster. She read the expressions on Hunter’s face as she gave him her body. He couldn’t help but stare at her lower half.

She was beautiful everywhere, and watching her ride him was almost too much for him to handle. He felt pure pleasure as he grabbed her hips to move them back and forth. He felt how wet she was from when she came earlier. This excited him even more. He gave into the feeling of pure pleasure. Finally, Hunter reached his own sweet release.

Afterward, they lay exhausted, their bodies intertwined. They had given each other every ounce of energy and intimacy, leaving them both breathless. While they had each experienced great sex before, this was different, and there was an undeniable chemistry that made their bodies fit together perfectly."

“That was amazing,” Hunter said enthusiastically.

“I agree,” Luna said. “It really was.”

Before they knew it, the two had fallen asleep in each other’s arms, utterly spent, having drained one another’s energy. They lay side by side, slipping into a deep sleep. Luna wasn’t accustomed to staying over at a man’s house after sex, but Hunter

was different. She didn't want to leave. Somehow, sleeping beside him felt even more intimate than the act itself—and she had enjoyed both.

Morning arrived sooner than expected. Hunter quietly slipped out of bed to take a shower. He whispered to Luna that he had business to attend to, but she could stay as long as she liked. It felt like an invitation as if he wanted her to remain in his apartment. His trust in her was surprising, given they'd only met the day before. Luna stayed in bed, replaying the events of the previous night in her mind. It had been spontaneous and adventurous — so unlike her usual self. But that's what made it thrilling. She liked this version of herself, even if she knew it couldn't last. She would soon need to find another nanny position and return to work. She also wondered whether the excitement with Hunter would fade just as quickly.

Last night was wonderful, and she wanted to see Hunter again. She had never felt this way about someone so quickly, but she didn't want to scare him away. Did he feel the same way as her, or was this just a one-night stand?

Meanwhile, in the shower, Hunter was thinking many of the same things. There was something that strongly attracted him to Luna, but there were many parts of himself she did not know about yet. It was nice not to have to share his baggage with someone. It made him feel like a stronger man, but eventually, the truth always comes out. No matter how much he liked her, was it better to let her go before she got hurt or before she hurt him?

When Hunter got out of the shower, he came back into the bedroom to find Luna asleep again. It was still early in the morning. He wanted nothing more than to lay in bed with her again, but he had business to attend to. The fancy apartment in the city wasn't going to pay for itself. Plus, he had other family members to take care of. He looked for a pen and a pad of paper. Hunter wrote a note to Luna and left it on the nightstand for her to find. He grabbed his jacket, looked at her one more time, and walked out the door. He desperately hoped he would see her again, but only time and

fate would tell. All he could do was wait, but Hunter wasn't used to being patient.

When Luna woke up again, she was startled to see Hunter had left without saying goodbye. She knew he had work to do, but she wanted to say goodbye to him in person. She didn't know if she would see him again. She saw the note he had left her when she placed her feet on the floor.

The note read, "Luna, what a wonderful night it was. I want to see you again. Here is my number. Reach out if you want; the choice is yours."

The note was blunt and to the point. Luna was glad to know she knew how to reach him, but something about the note felt impersonal. It felt like he was holding something back. The choice was hers? Where was the take charge man from the night before? Something felt different about this, and she didn't know what it was.

Luna got dressed and hurried home. Her apartment was much smaller than Hunter's. It was simple, but it was also all she needed. Most of the time, she wasn't home; she was tending to other people's and their families' needs. At least she had a night of her own. She didn't know how many more of those she would get. It was time to job hunt again.

Luna called her friend, Ella. She had known her since Ella immigrated from Guatemala. The two developed a close relationship, and Luna considered Ella her best friend. She normally told her everything, but she wanted to keep the events of last night to herself. There was something special about keeping it secret.

"Hey, Ella," Luna said. "It's that time again, and I need another position for a family. Do you have any leads?"

Ella was enthusiastic about this news. She had an exciting new lead on a person needing a nanny.

“Luna,” Ella said. “I’m so glad you called! I just heard about this guy in the city that needs a nanny. He has a small child, a son, and he is a single dad, ya know. He’s famous too! A hockey player! Can you believe it? I mean, this would be perfect for you. I’m told that this position will require a lot of traveling. He wants a live-in nanny, which I know you don’t usually do, but I’m telling you, Luna, this would be great for you! The pay is unbelievable!”

Luna pondered. She didn’t know if she was up for too much traveling. Sure, it sounded exciting, but it would also be a lot of work.

“Who is the guy?” she asked.

“Well, that’s the thing,” Ella said.

“I’m not entirely sure. The interview for the position is run through a third party. I only found out he is a hockey player through the rumor mill. You know how I am with gossip! Anyway, if you get the job, which you most certainly will with your recommendations, you will find out who the guy is. You have to promise you will tell me! I wanna know all about it!”

“Thanks for the info, Ella,” Luna said.

“You always come through. Just email me the information when you have a chance. I will think it over.”

“Luna!” exclaimed Ella.

“What’s there to think about? You’re young and free-spirited, and this would give you the chance to travel the country. Who knows? It might even turn into a romance—the guy is single, after all. The only catch is that it’ll be a few months before you can start. Enjoy the time off, though! I think they’re just tying up some

loose ends with the previous nanny."

The two women hung up. Luna thought about the offer. It was the chance of a lifetime, but what about Hunter? She had the most amazing night of her life. Was she going to throw away this fantastic opportunity over a man she just met? She needed more time to think.

Whenever Luna needed to clear her head, she took a walk around the city. Grabbing her things, she wandered the streets for a little over an hour before returning home. During her walk, she received an email about a new job opportunity. The number to schedule an interview was included.

Back at her apartment, she tossed her keys onto the kitchen table and shrugged off her jacket, letting it fall to the floor. A sense of frustration tugged at her, though she couldn't quite pinpoint the reason. With a sigh, she picked up her phone and dialed the number from the email.

"Hello," she said. "My name is Luna, and I would like to set up an interview for the open live-in nanny position."

The months passed, and Luna wondered if she would see Hunter again. She thought about reaching out to him, but a significant part of her also wanted him to be the first to make a move. She wanted to make sure that he wanted her. She felt that he gave her mixed signals. Maybe he did not want a serious relationship. That would be fine with Luna. She just wanted to hear that from him. As the time went on, Luna focused on her upcoming job interview. She needed the job badly, not only due to financial reasons, but because she needed a distraction from thinking about Hunter.

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Luna glanced at herself in the mirror, dressed conservatively, and prepared for her interview. Her résumé and references were neatly tucked into a professional-looking portfolio. As she reached into her purse to check for her wallet, she spotted the note Hunter had written her the day after their first date. For some reason, she had stuffed it into her purse. She still hadn't called him.

Could she, especially with the new live-in nanny position she was likely to get? Where would their relationship go from here? Could it survive with all the traveling? Did Hunter even want a relationship? The questions swirled in her mind, driving her crazy. She didn't need the distraction, not right now. With a sigh, she tucked the note back deep into her purse.

Luna made her way to her interview. She was nervous but prepared. She always got a little nervous right before an interview, even though she always got every job she applied for. When she arrived at the office, the ordinary proceedings took place.

A young blonde woman, who was very attractive, greeted her. She introduced herself as the representative's personal assistant. Luna thought it was strange to interview with the assistant instead of an actual member of the family she would be working with, but then again, the man she was interviewing for was famous. She supposed they had to vet anyone who was near him.

The interview went according to plan. Luna breathed a sigh of relief. Then, her thoughts drifted back to Hunter. Before she could delve too much into thought, the young blonde woman named Emily interrupted her thoughts.

"I'm not going to lie," Emily said with a smile. "I think you are perfect for this job."

You are the most qualified person we have interviewed for this position. I hope I am not speaking too soon, but you are hired!”

Luna smiled. This would be a new adventure for her. She was ambivalent, but part of her also thought that this was where she was supposed to be.

“The gentleman you will be working for is here today, in the office,” Emily stated. “Would you like to meet him?”

Luna took a deep breath and nodded her head.

“Perfect,” Emily said. “Let me go get Mr. Hunter Pave.”

Hunter? Hunter, hmmm? That was a weird coincidence, Luna thought. It had to be a coincidence, right? She stood up and straightened her attire to meet her new boss. As she straightened her outfit, she looked up to see Hunter walk in. It wasn't a coincidence. It was her Hunter. What were the odds?

Hunter was just as surprised to see her. His mouth dropped to the floor.

“Luna?” he said, shocked. “You are going to be my new nanny?”

Luna stayed silent for a second. This could definitely complicate things. A flood of questions entered her mind, but she stayed silent for a moment before finally replying.

“Yes,” she replied bluntly. “I am.”, “Oh,” Emily said, surprised. “You two know each other?”, “Kind of,” Luna answered. “We've met once before.”

Mr. Pave swallowed. He didn't know what to say. How could he pursue a relationship with a woman who was going to be working for him? That would not be

professional at all. Also, why hadn't she called him back? Did she not find him attractive anymore? Would she find him attractive once they started working together? He stopped himself in thought.

“Well,” Emily stated. “That makes things easier for all of us. I will let you two get reacquainted with one another.”

Emily walked out of the room, leaving Hunter and Luna alone. The air between them grew thick with an awkward silence, neither sure how to begin. Hunter glanced at Luna, his eyes quickly taking in her appearance. She was dressed far more conservatively than the night they had first met, but she still exuded a quiet allure. She looked good — NO, she looked stunning.

Hunter felt a familiar tension rise in him, making it difficult to stay composed. His mind flashed back to their first encounter, to the chemistry that had sparked between them so effortlessly. Now, in this professional setting, things were different. He fought to keep those memories at bay, reminding himself to stay focused. She was here for business, not for rekindling a connection that had once felt so electric.

But it wasn't easy. The pull he felt toward her was undeniable, a gravitational force he had to resist consciously. He swallowed hard, his hands gripping the chair as if grounding himself, silently reminding himself of the need to keep things professional. This wasn't the time or place to let his emotions take over.

Luna, for her part, seemed just as unsure. She shifted slightly in her seat, her eyes momentarily meeting his before darting away. The tension between them was palpable, but neither dared acknowledge it.

“I meant to call,” Luna started to say. “I meant to call, but I needed to find work. So, that was my main focus.”

Hunter slowly nodded his head.

“I don’t want this to complicate things,” Hunter replied. “My son, Adam, has had it rough since my wife died. The other two nannies quit suddenly.

They couldn’t handle all the travel. Will that be a problem for you?”

The tone of voice took Luna off guard. She had expected a warmer welcome from him. Perhaps he was angry that she never called him back. Possibly, he just wanted to keep things professional between them, or maybe he just didn’t want her anymore. Maybe it was all just a wonderful one-time thing between them?

“The travel won’t be an issue,” she stated coldly. “I am a professional.”

Hunter gently smiled.

“Perfect,” he responded. “I will get Emily to send you all of the information. She should have it emailed to you by next week.”

Hunter nodded in Luna’s direction again and then walked out of the room. That was it. That was the end of the conversation. She was stunned.

Just like that, he was gone. She shook her head from side to side. All she needed to do was focus on her new job. She would be working with him and his son, Adam. She had to leave her emotions and take her new job seriously. Luna grabbed her belongings and went to her new apartment. With everything happening with her new job, one thing was sure, she would be traveling soon. She decided it was best to get a head start on her packing.

The next week, Luna had her bags and was back at the apartment where she had spent the night with Hunter. She sat awkwardly at the kitchen table, waiting. Within a few

moments, she heard the pitter patter of a child walking. She looked up to see a young child, about five years old, walking into the kitchen. It was Adam, Hunter's son.

Luna introduced herself to him. Kids were easy for her—she had spent her whole life raising children, so winning over Adam would be no problem. But Hunter was a different story. He remained cold and distant, with most of the communication about her new job going through Emily, his assistant. Hunter seemed absorbed in his work and training for the upcoming hockey season.

Hunter followed behind Adam, standing in the doorway as he watched the interaction between his son and Luna. She was so natural with him, effortlessly stepping into a motherly role, and Adam immediately warmed to her. Her maternal instincts made Hunter more drawn to her, though he tried to push those thoughts aside. "I'm off to training," Hunter said. "I'll be back later this evening."

Luna nodded and watched Hunter walk out the door. There he was, just gone again. It seemed that he had a big habit of running away. She focused on Adam. He was not yet in kindergarten, and it was time to start the preschool lessons. Luna started working with Adam right away, and she was pleased to discover that he was a bright, well-behaved boy.

That evening, after Adam had gone to bed, Luna heard the sound of Hunter entering the apartment. She had just finished cleaning up the day's mess when he walked through the door. As soon as he stepped inside, their eyes met. The tension between them lingered, and the moment felt unmistakably awkward.

"Adam is already asleep," Luna said, trying to break the awkward silence between them.

"Already?" Hunter asked. "The other nannies had such a hard time getting him to bed."

“Well,” she replied with a smile. “I am not like the other nannies.”

Hunter smiled back.

“No, you certainly are not,” he responded with a gentle laugh.

The awkward silence returned between them. Neither of them knew what to say, but there was an evident sexual tension in the air.

“This is awkward, isn’t it?” Hunter finally asked

“A bit,” she responded while looking down.

Hunter moved toward Luna, every step deliberate and slow. The urge to reach out, to touch her, coursed through him, but he resisted. Her long hair framed her face, and though her skirt was more modest than the red dress she wore when they first met, it still clung to her figure, drawing his eyes to her legs. The closer he got, the harder it was to stay in control.

Luna inhaled sharply, feeling her body respond to his presence before she could stop it. A warmth spread through her, a pulse of desire she struggled to ignore. She held her breath, her heart racing, but the tension between them was undeniable—like a force pulling them together, even as they tried to keep their distance.

“Why didn’t you call me?” Hunter finally asked.

Luna was stunned. Was this the cause of the tension between them?

“I was going to,” she started to say. “I just didn’t know with this new job how the distance would affect us or if you even wanted anything serious. I had no idea I would be interviewing to work for you.”

“Funny how life works, isn’t it?” Hunter responded. He walked closer to her. His hand gently touched her face.

“We should probably be professional, shouldn’t we?” Hunter asked as his hand still graced her porcelain face.

“Probably,” Luna stated as she nodded.

Their breathing quickened as Luna leaned in, silently pleading for a kiss. Hunter didn’t hesitate, and he had been waiting for this moment. The desire to kiss her again surged within him. He ran his fingers through her hair and leaned down to capture her lips.

As their mouths met, the heat between them intensified once more. The connection was immediate and undeniable. They embraced passionately, pulling each other closer, consumed by their desire. Nothing else mattered but the longing they felt for one another.

Hunter picked Luna up effortlessly and carried her to his bedroom, their passionate kisses intensifying as they went. There was no need for foreplay this time. The pent-up tension between them demanded immediate release. Luna pulled him as close as she could, her hands finding the zipper of his pants. He quickly removed his t-shirt, urgency guiding their movements.

Neither of them bothered with the intricacies of fully undressing. Instead, Hunter freed his penis, and Luna wrapped her hands around it, moving up and down, eager to feel how hard he was for her. He slid her panties down, leaving them hanging on one leg, before taking hold of her again.

As she pleased him with her hands, Hunter returned the favor, his fingers sinking deep, continuously in and out of her. Their shared moans filled the room, each sound

heightening the electric connection between them. Luna felt the heat of her desire pooling within her, and Hunter could sense her wetness, the evidence of her longing for him. They craved one another, the sexual chemistry between them undeniable.

With her mouth slightly open in ecstasy, Hunter grabbed himself, positioned to enter her. In one swift motion, he was in. Luna arched her back, overwhelmed by the sensation of him inside her. They made love with a raw urgency, their bodies moving in perfect harmony, faster and faster, until they both reached their peaks together. As Luna dug her nails into Hunter's back, the pleasure coursed through them, intoxicating and exhilarating.

Each wondered if they would have the chance to be together again. They savored the pleasure they brought each other, knowing they could afford to be greedy that night. Tomorrow, they would resume their professionalism, but for now, they reveled in the intimacy they shared, their bodies fitting together perfectly as if they were made for each other.

When they were done, they both lay on the bed, staring at the ceiling. Where did they go from here? The situation was so unorthodox. Luna finally got up off the bed and started to dress herself.

"What are you doing?" Hunter asked, his voice eager yet laced with confusion. "I need to go home," Luna said softly.

"I know I'm supposed to live here, but I just... I need some space to think."

"You don't want to stay?" Hunter asked, a hint of disappointment in his voice. "I thought you would. Isn't that the position you applied for? It'll be your new home now, won't it?"

"I do," Luna admitted, her hesitation clear.

“But that’s the problem, Hunter. I was hired to live here as Adam’s nanny. I’m supposed to be part of his routine and his stability. But with us, it’s different. I can’t just act like things haven’t changed between us.”

“Things have changed,” Hunter said gently, stepping closer.

“But why does that mean you have to go?”

“Because it’s hard for me,” Luna explained, her voice thick with emotion.

“I can’t be here, under the same roof, pretending I’m just Adam’s nanny when every time I’m around you, I feel something so much more. It’s not fair to him or me. I need to figure out how to balance this... whatever this is, before I can stay and not feel torn in two.”

Hunter sat in silence, reflecting on Luna’s words. She was right—his son’s well-being had to come first. Since his mother’s passing, his son had lacked the stability he desperately needed. As much as he wished Luna could stay, he knew it would be best for her not to spend the night.

He watched her as she dressed, a mix of regret and admiration swirling within him. There was something about Luna that made him want to be open and vulnerable despite his usual struggle to show his emotions. Before she left, he felt compelled to say something important. With determination, he stood up and walked over to her, knowing that being honest was the only way to truly care for both her and his son.

“Wait,” Hunter said.

He grabbed her and passionately kissed her again.

“I don’t know what this is,” he told her vulnerably. “But whatever this is, I am glad

tonight happened, and I hope you do too.”

“I do,” Luna said honestly. “I really am happy.”

“I’ll see you tomorrow,” he replied. “Get home safely.”

“I’ll see you tomorrow,” Luna repeated with a smile.

He watched her walk out of his bedroom, and just like that, Luna was gone again.

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The next few days settled into a normal routine. Luna spent her time at Hunter's house, working with Adam, and their bond grew stronger with each passing day. She found joy in being his nanny, relishing the moments when his eyes lit up as she read to him. The trust he placed in her made her heart swell, and she felt a growing connection that was almost maternal as if he were her own child.

Meanwhile, her relationship with Hunter remained strictly professional since their last encounter. Yet, the sexual tension between them was undeniable, a connection that hung in the air. They both understood that their chemistry had to be put on hold for the sake of Adam, who needed their full attention. Yet, even in those moments of shared smiles and playful interactions with Adam, Luna couldn't help but feel the magnetic pull of her attraction to Hunter.

Hunter had also been busy training for the upcoming hockey season. His days were long and very tiring. They couldn't be together, even if they wanted to. There was no time. Adam needed attending to, and Hunter had to focus on work. He was the sole provider for his son, and he had to ensure his son was well taken care of.

Hunter trained vigorously. He loved to play hockey, but as much as he loved the sport, a part of his mind always drifted back to Luna. He had to make a mindful effort not to let her consume his thoughts. This season was crucial. He and his team needed to win as many games as possible this season. Hunter stood on the ice, taking a break from training.

"Hey, Hunter," You distracted or something." Hunter's teammate, Alex, asked. "You haven't exactly been on your best game today."

Hunter shook his head back and forth.

“I’m good,” he said quickly. “I’m just a little tired. I didn’t get much sleep last night.”

“Ah, I see,” Alex said. “You haven’t found a nanny yet? That has to be difficult. It has to be hard to balance work and a kid, man.”

Hunter cleared his throat.

“Actually,” Hunter started to say. “I did hire a nanny, finally. She is great with Adam.”

“Oh yeah?” Alex inquired. “Is she hot?”

Hunter’s expression suddenly turned stern just at the thought of someone else finding Luna attractive. Even though they weren’t officially together, he had no desire to be with anyone else, nor did he want her with anyone else. The idea that someone else saw her beauty felt like a personal threat.

“You know the rules,” Hunter said very seriously. “Attractive or not, never hit on my nanny, Alex. It makes things more difficult. You have to keep things professional.”

“Professional,” Alex stated with a huff. “Where is the fun in professional?”

“There isn’t any,” Hunter said in a matter-of-fact tone. “Now, let’s get back to training.”

Hunter and Alex skated back to the rest of their team. The team huddled up to listen to the coach speak. It seemed the coach had something important to say, and there was an earnest feeling in the air. Hunter wondered what all the commotion was about.

“All right, everyone,” the team’s coach, Frank, said. “Gather round, everyone.”

Everyone huddled up and listened intently. This meeting was not on the team’s schedule. Everyone wondered what was going on.

“As some of you all know,” Frank began, his tone turning serious. “As some of you all know, my father has been in ill health lately. After much consideration with a heavy heart, I’ve decided to take a short hiatus. I’ll be back before the season ends, but for now, I need to focus on my father.”

The news of Frank’s father worsening saddened Hunter deeply. David, Frank’s father, was also a coach who had helped lead the hockey team before becoming ill. The doctors had diagnosed him with terminal cancer, but Hunter still held onto hope for a cure. After all, people recovered from life-altering illnesses all the time, and he wanted David to pull through and be okay.

Not only had David been a leader for the hockey team, but he had also been like a father to Hunter during his time of need. Hunter’s own father didn’t speak to him, which was why he focused so much on being a good father to Adam. He wanted to be everything his father wasn’t. When David entered his life, Hunter appreciated having a healthy father figure around. David had helped Frank coach at the same time Hunter was drafted into the National Hockey League, offering sound advice and leadership. Over the years, they had developed a close relationship.

Hunter knew he needed to make time to visit David, but he dreaded seeing him so sick. Still, David had always been there for Hunter during hockey season and throughout life’s most challenging, happiest, and saddest moments. He was present at the hospital when Adam was born, and he stood by Hunter during the funeral after his wife died in a car accident. This experience was why he walked so much in the city and avoided cabs; he didn’t trust other drivers, especially in winter. He blamed his wife’s death on the bad driving of others.

When Hunter was left alone with a small child and no wife, Frank and David were there for him. As much as he didn't want to see David sick, he knew he had to pull himself up by the bootstraps and be there for him, just as David had been supportive of him. He hated thinking about the loss of his wife.

His wife, Sarah, had been a beautiful woman who tragically died in the back of a cab due to a horrific car accident. She was taken too soon, and Hunter had loved her deeply. The two were excited to start a family together and were elated when Adam was born. Sarah's passing changed both Hunter and Adam forever. Hunter never thought he could get over his deceased wife; in many ways, he hadn't. But in the last four years, something shifted within him, especially after meeting Luna. The feelings he had when he was with her mirrored those he felt around Sarah and perhaps even felt stronger. This realization frightened him because it contradicted his desire to remain professional.

The team started to murmur among themselves, a sense of nervousness settling in. Their coach was their leader, and losing him at the beginning of the season, even before it started, agitated them. They needed a figure to guide them.

"Hey, everyone, calm down," Frank said. "Do not worry at all. I know this is somewhat of a shock to you, but I give you my word that I am not leaving you high and dry. It is quite the opposite. There is going to be a new coach for half of the season. I want to introduce you to Stella. Stella, come on out."

Stella, an attractive older woman with long, red hair came out. She was in her mid-forties, and there was an evident sex appeal about her. Despite her looks, she had a reputation for being a successful trainer. She frequently substituted for other coaches or aided other teams. She was part of successful teams that were successful. Although the news of Frank leaving the team temporarily was a shock to the team, having an attractive, effective coach wasn't the worst thing in the world.

The team watched as Stella walked out. Most of the men were in awe of her. She was a natural leader, and she was a pretty leader, at that. Hunter didn't pay as much attention, though. His thoughts drifted back to Luna. Sure, he noticed Stella's beauty, but she had nothing compared to Luna. If he couldn't have her for the time being, then he didn't want anyone else.

Stella, the new head coach for the time being, looked around the crowd. She was excited for the new position. She loved hockey. As she looked out at each new player she would be leading, she noticed one player in particular. She didn't know what it was, but something about her was drawn to one player on the rink. She was staring at Hunter.

That evening, Luna cleaned up the playroom. She and Adam had the best day together. After he finished getting ready for bed, she read him a bedtime story, and put him to bed. She stayed in the living room, reading a book. She was waiting for Hunter to come back home, so she could leave and head back to her apartment.

The interactions between her and Hunter were nothing but professional since the last time they made love, and although she wanted more, she knew she was acting in the best interest of Adam. Suddenly, she heard the door open. Hunter walked in with his gym bag. Luna got up from her seat and walked over to greet him.

"Did practice go well?" she asked. "You look like you had a long day."

Hunter appreciated how Luna cared about his day. It made him more attracted to her, but he stopped his thoughts from going further. He looked her up and down before he responded.

"It was an interesting day, actually," Hunter stated. "We have a temporary coach. This woman, Stella is going to be filling in for Frank. Rumor has it that she is a good coach. So, we will see how the season goes."

Luna was taken aback by surprise. She knew there were women coaches in all sports, but for some reason, the thought of a female coach, coaching Hunter's team made her body stiffen. She tried not to show her immediate jealousy towards the situation.

"Oh?" Luna stated with surprise. "That seems like a sudden change right before the start of the season. I hope it all works out."

Hunter could hear the tone in her voice change. Was she being possessive of him? Part of him was surprised by this, and the other part of him liked that she was jealous.

"I'm sure it will," he said with a slight smile. "But like I said earlier, time will tell."

Luna gathered her belongings and walked towards the door. Hunter watched as she walked away. She looked so beautiful.

"Wait," Hunter said. "Let me walk you out."

Hunter walked her to the door. When they approached the entrance to the apartment, she turned around and looked up at him.

"I will see you tomorrow," Luna said softly.

She didn't want to leave, but she knew she had to. She was sticking to what they had discussed the last night they were romantically together. Adam had to be the focus. He needed stability, and he didn't need a complicated relationship to get in the way of his development.

Hunter wanted so badly to kiss Luna. He eventually leaned down as if his lips were going to touch hers, but Luna reached her index finger up and gently touched his mouth to stop him.

“Professional,” she said softly. “It’s not about what we want right now. We have to be professional. We have to do this for Adam.”

Hunter smiled. His emotions were conflicted, but at the end of the day, none of that mattered. She was right. Adam had already been through so much after losing his mother unexpectedly.

“For Adam,” he said positively. “Be safe going home, and I will see you tomorrow.”

As he watched Luna leave his apartment, Hunter felt a deep appreciation for her dedication to Adam’s care. Her nurturing instincts made her incredibly attractive, and he admired the genuine concern she showed for his son. Closing the door behind her, one thought consumed his mind: he couldn’t wait to see Luna again tomorrow morning. The bond she was building with Adam filled him with hope and warmth, deepening his feelings for her even further.

When Luna got home, she stepped into the shower, letting the hot water wash away the day. She felt a swell of pride for showing such restraint with Hunter; her feelings for him were undeniable. As the steam enveloped her, her thoughts drifted back to him—his mouth, his body, the way he knew just how to please her. The mere memory of him ignited a longing within her that was impossible to ignore. It had been far too long since she had experienced that sweet release.

As the water cascaded down her skin, Luna reached down between her thighs, imagining it was Hunter's touch igniting her desire. She could almost feel the way he caressed her body, stirring her cravings further. She needed to find release. The entire way home, her thoughts had been consumed by him, and the only way to ease that longing was to pleasure herself while envisioning him.

She recalled the sensation of his mouth on her clit, the way his hands grasped her breasts, and how he thrust into her. Memories of his large, thick penis filled her mind,

intensifying her need. As she slid her fingers inside herself, the pleasure built until it became overwhelming. She continued to explore her pussy until waves of ecstasy washed over her, leaving her breathless. While it wasn't quite the same as the orgasm she had with Hunter, it was a satisfying release, a momentary escape from the yearning that consumed her.

Afterward, she finished her shower, got herself ready for bed, and set her alarm. While lying in bed, she wondered if Hunter ever touched himself and thought of her. She also wondered how much longer they would be able to keep their hands off one another. How much longer could they be professional?

The next day, she arrived early, as usual, and saw Hunter eating breakfast. He looked up at her as she walked into the apartment.

“Hey,” Hunter said cheerfully. “Good morning. How did you sleep?”

Luna thought back to her personal time in the shower. She blushed.

“I slept pretty well,” she replied. “And you? How did you sleep?”

“Not well, actually,” Hunter said seriously. “I was in some pain from all the intense training, but I'm sure it will go away soon. Just have to push through. It is all a part of hockey season.

Luna wished she could take his pain away. She wanted to give him a massage, touch him tenderly, and make him feel better. She let the thoughts of touching his body fade away.

“Hey,” Hunter started to say. “Hey, I was wondering if you could bring Adam by the rink sometime later today. Maybe you could bring him after lunch? He loves watching me train and play.”

She nodded. She was excited about this, too. She wanted to see Hunter play. She had been wondering what he looked like in a hockey jersey. She imagined he would still be sexy, perhaps even sexier.

“Yes,” she replied enthusiastically. “I definitely will bring him.”

Hunter smiled and thanked her before picking up his gym bag and heading out the door, a spring in his step. Knowing she would be watching him practice filled him with excitement; he wanted to show off his skills on the ice. As he walked, thoughts of impressing her swirled in his mind, mingling with the undeniable desire he still felt for her. The frustration of not being able to touch her was building, and he knew he would have to channel that energy into his performance on the ice.

Hunter arrived at the rink excited and ready to take charge. He was a seasoned player for a team with a reputation for being a good leader. He often took control during practice, and he was excited to showcase his leadership skills to his son and Luna. He wanted to impress them both. When he got to the locker room to change into his training uniform, he heard his teammates talking amongst themselves.

“Yeah, man, it could definitely be worse,” one teammate said. “Stella is hot for an older woman, bro. No lie, man. I would bang her.”

The men were gathered at one end of the locker room, engaged in lively conversation and laughter as they shared stories and jokes. Meanwhile, Hunter deliberately positioned himself at the opposite end, seeking a moment of solitude. While he acknowledged that Stella was an attractive older woman, he understood that, as their new coach, she deserved his utmost respect. He had no desire to participate in any inappropriate locker room talk about her; such behavior felt uncalled for.

Choosing to distance himself from the group, Hunter began undressing, focusing on his routine, and mentally preparing for practice. He took a deep breath, allowing the

noise to fade as he concentrated on his own thoughts and goals for the day ahead.

“I mean, if she wasn’t our coach,” he heard one man say. “I’d have to take that girl for a test drive. You know what I mean, bro?”

Hunter quickly changed into his training uniform, locked his belongings in his locker, and got the hell out of there. On his way out of the locker room, he ran into Stella in the hallway leading to the ice rink.

“Sorry about that, ma’am,” Hunter said to Stella. “I didn’t see you there.”

He desperately hoped she couldn’t hear how the other men were talking about her.

“Oh, please,” Stella said with a smile. “Please, call me Stella.”

She reached out her hand for Hunter to shake. He thought it was odd she wanted him to call her by her first name. Calling her ma’am or coach elicited more respect, and she seemed to want to communicate on a personal level.

“Okay,” Hunter said with a smile. “Coach Stella, it is then.

He thought calling her Coach Stella was a fair compromise. Hopefully, she agreed with his suggestion.

“I’m actually glad you ran into me,” Stella said somewhat seductively. “I want you to lead the training this morning. I want to see each player’s leadership skills, and today is your lucky day; start with the same drill you guys ended with last practice. How does that sound?”

“Whatever you want, Coach Stella,” Hunter said while nodding his head in agreement.

“I told you,” Stella said while gently touching Hunter’s arm. “I told you, Hunter. Just call me Stella.”

He watched as Stella walked away, pondering whether she had been flirting with him. Surely, as a professional, she would act more appropriately, yet a part of him couldn’t help but wonder. He quickly dismissed the thought; his mind was still occupied with Luna. That reminded him—she would be arriving soon with his son. With a sense of purpose, he headed to the ice rink to prepare for training.

Meanwhile, at his apartment, Luna was working with Adam. Today was math day, focusing on basic counting skills and simple addition and subtraction. Adam clearly demonstrated intelligence beyond his years and was likely to outperform most, if not all, of his peers when he started kindergarten. Luna felt a swell of pride in his progress, thrilled that she could contribute to his future success in school. Glancing at the clock, she realized it was almost time to leave for the rink that was on the outskirts of the city. Excitement bubbled within her at the thought of seeing Hunter in action.

She got Adam ready to leave, gathered her belongings, and headed downstairs. Initially, she had expected to take the subway with Adam to the ice rink, but as she stepped outside the apartment building, she was surprised to see a black-tinted car waiting for them. Standing beside the car was Peter, the driver—a tall man who appeared to be waiting specifically for her and Adam.

“This is for us?” Luna asked the driver, as soon as he got out of the car.

“Yes, the driver said with a polite smile. “Mr. Hunter wanted to make sure you and Adam got to the ice rink safely. There is a car seat for him in the back.”

Luna was surprised by this gracious gesture. She could get used to traveling in style. Not taking the subway was always a good thing in her book. She gently picked up

Adam and placed him in the car seat. After she made sure he was safely buckled in, she got into the car, and they were on their way to see Hunter in action. Even though she was still on the clock, going to see a professional hockey player train while riding in a private car made her feel special, like a princess.

By the time they arrived at the training area, Adam was excited to see his dad play. She thanked the driver for the ride and ensured he would be there to pick her and Adam up when it was time to go. She took Adam by the hand and walked inside. This was all new territory for her. She did not know much about the sport of hockey, but she was excited to learn. All she knew about it was that the sport consisted of large men who skated and tried to score. She also knew that often, the game became violent. Something about its ruggedness excited her, and she was looking forward to seeing Hunter in a jersey. She knew he would look good, and she wanted something else to fantasize about.

She walked to the stands with Adam. She could see the team spread out over the ice. They were doing agility drills. She looked for Hunter, but it was hard to see from so far away.

“Daddy!” Adam exclaimed.

She looked towards the direction Adam pointed. Luna looked out into the crowd. There he was. Hunter was leading the agility drill. He was in charge of the situation. Seeing him in control made her think about the last time they made love. She scanned the ice rink and noticed several players, including an attractive older woman standing on the sidelines. Recognizing her immediately, Luna realized that the woman must be Stella.

Forget being older; she was a beautiful woman. She wondered if Hunter thought Stella was more attractive than her. Did Hunter want to be sexually involved with Stella like he had been with her? She shook her head back and forth. She reminded

herself that there was no reason to be so jealous or possessive of Hunter. They were not a couple, and even though she had feelings for him, none of that mattered. It was her idea to remain professional, after all, and technically, Hunter could do whatever he wanted to. He could be with anyone he liked. Although, she hoped if Hunter wasn't going to be with her, then he wouldn't be with anyone else. It was all wishful thinking, she thought.

Stella observed her players on the ice, pleased with how well the training was progressing. She felt confident that they would have a successful season together. However, her gaze kept drifting back to Hunter—her temptation. She had successfully kept her reputation for dating team members under wraps, yet there lingered a silent acknowledgment among hockey executives that she had a reputation as a loose woman. Each season, she would typically choose a “pet,” a kind and exceptionally talented player, and secretly take credit for their success. In return, they believed it was her guidance—both sexual and otherwise—that propelled them to excel during the hockey season.

Her latest “pet” was Jackson Hodges, the current golden boy of the sport, who had garnered attention from every team thanks to her influence — or at least, that's how she saw it. Lately, she had been feeling increasingly sexually hungry. Being with someone younger made her feel vibrant and attractive, reinforcing her belief that she wasn't washed up. The last thing she wanted was to be perceived that way. Once again, she glanced at Hunter, convinced he could help restore her sense of self-worth.

From afar, Luna watched the team train. She had noticed Stella, too, and Stella's demeanor threw her off guard. It wasn't that she was jealous of her; it was that she noticed Stella staring at Hunter. Being a woman, she knew how women thought, and she could tell one thing for sure. Stella wanted Hunter. She was practically drooling over him. Luna could feel her body stiffen.

When the team took a break, Hunter skated over to the side of the rink. He sat down

and took his ice skates off. He looked around to find Luna and Adam. When he finally found them, his whole face lit up. Luna made her way towards him with his son.

“You look great,” Luna exclaimed with a smile. “Didn’t your daddy do good, Adam?”

Adam ran towards Hunter and wrapped his arms around his legs. It felt good to make his son proud.

“Daddy did good!” Adam cheered happily.

Hunter reached down and picked up his son.

“Thank you so much for bringing him,” Hunter said genuinely. “I want him to see why I am often gone away from home. Maybe it will help him understand why I work so much. Plus, I want him to also like the sport and think his dad has a cool job.”

Hunter and Luna laughed in unison, and he felt a warm sense of happiness having her there with him. Just then, he heard the sound of skates gliding up behind him. Turning around, he saw three of his teammates approaching with mischievous grins. Curiosity flickered in his mind about what they were up to.

“Hey, man,” one of his teammates called out. “Who is this? Is this your new girl?”

Hunter’s teammate, Henry, reached out his hand to shake Luna’s.

“This is Luna,” Hunter said seriously. “Luna, this is my teammate, Henry.”

Luna reached out her hand to shake Henry’s. Hunter then introduced her to the others

who had skated over to assess the situation. Hunter thought they were all so nosy.

“Hunter,” Henry started to say. “Hunter, you didn’t tell us how beautiful Luna is.”

Hunter quickly turned his head and stared at Henry. His stare was a death stare. Luna had never seen Hunter look so serious. Henry, on the other hand, seemed to have no idea what was going on, and he seemed to have crossed a line by complimenting Luna.

“Hopefully,” Henry started to say to Luna. “Hopefully, Hunter, here, isn’t working you too hard. Still have to have a personal life, right?”

Henry seductively smiled at Luna. He obviously found her attractive, and who could blame him? Hunter certainly couldn’t, but he did want Henry to respect his rule for the team: no hitting on the nanny!

“Why don’t we show her around?” Henry said with a smile. “Hunter, don’t you ever let Luna have a break?” Henry added.

“I will show her around,” Hunter said with a harsh tone. “Adam and Luna will stay with me. Plus, you have to redo those drills. You were looking pretty weak on the ice.”

Henry gently laughed, but it was obvious his ego was bruised. It was one thing to comment on his technique, but it was a whole other thing to comment on it in front of a beautiful, single woman. Henry kept his mouth shut, but he was definitely angry on the inside. He looked at Hunter with a smirk.

Hunter was the unspoken team captain, even though they did not have an official team captain. Hunter was the best and most seasoned player. His expertise and talent made him the best leader for the group, and Henry envied what he had. Henry envied

Hunter's natural leadership abilities, his speed on this ice, and now, the time he spent with Luna. Luna was beautiful, and even though Hunter made it clear it was unacceptable to hit on the nanny, a part of Henry felt entitled to her.

"Well, Luna," Henry said with a gentle smile. "It was very nice to meet you. I am sure we will meet again."

Henry reached out his hand. Luna thought he wanted to shake it again, but instead of shaking her hand, Henry kissed it. He looked at Hunter as he did it. Hunter tried to hold back his anger, but his face said a thousand words. Luna, herself, was a little shocked. It was obvious that they were in some pissing contest with one another, and she felt in the middle of it all. The whole thing reeked of machismo, and she wanted no part of it. She thought it was best to intervene before things got too out of hand.

"It was nice to meet you too, Henry," Luna said politely. "Hunter, would you mind showing me around the place? I think Adam wants to see everything, too."

Hunter was thankful that Luna wanted him to show her around. He smiled at her and nodded. Henry watched as they walked away. Sure, Hunter won for now, but Henry was determined to see Luna again. If he couldn't be the leader of the team, maybe he could convince Luna to spend a night with him. He stared until they were out of sight.

Hunter wanted to hold Luna's hand as they walked, but he controlled himself. He didn't like watching Henry flirting with her. It made him feel possessive of her, but it had been months since he and Luna's last sexual interaction. They had managed to keep normalcy, for Adam's sake. He wondered how much longer that would last. He felt the need to reclaim her.

"So," Luna said. "This is where you spend the majority of your time."

Luna looked around. The area was big, but besides a large ice rink and locker rooms,

there was not much there. Hunter did show her the lunchroom and Stella's office. The door was closed, but the lights were on. Hunter and Luna continued walking down the hallway. As soon as they passed by her office, Stella opened the door.

"Hunterlo!" Stella exclaimed. "Hunterlo, is this your little man?"

Luna cringed inside. She hated the nickname, Hunterlo. She was pretty sure Hunter hated it, too, but he would never say anything to her because Stella was technically his coach. They both turned around and stared at Stella. Luna wondered if Stella was going to acknowledge her presence. She stood there, waiting.

Stella leaned down and introduced herself to Adam.

"Isn't he just the cutest!" Stella exclaimed. Then she stood up and looked directly at Hunter. She continued to ignore Luna, who stood there awkwardly.

"By the way, Hunter," Stella started to say. "You did great on the ice today. You really took charge out there, and the guys listen to you. I appreciate your help. I know they are still adjusting to the change of having me as their head coach for a while. It will benefit them to have someone like you, who has been with the team for a couple of years, take charge."

Stella walked closer to Hunter. Was she really not going to say hello to her? She realized she was the nanny, but she was also a human being. The decent and kind thing to do would be to say hello, like a normal, polite person would. She doubted that Stella was a normal person, though. Watching her talk to Hunter was like watching a cougar attack its prey.

Stella moved by Luna to stand beside Hunter. Luna moved out of the way to make room for her. She grabbed Adam's hand and walked into the lunchroom.

“I’m going to let the two of you talk,” Luna said to Hunter awkwardly. “Adam, let’s go get a snack from the break room. I think I saw a couple of vending machines.”

Adam grabbed Luna’s hand, and they walked back down the hallway. Stella watched as they left. She wanted to be alone with Hunter and saw Luna as a threat. She learned the hard way never to trust an attractive nanny. Stella placed her hand gently on Hunter’s shoulder.

“I want you to be my right-hand man,” Stella said softly. “You know these men better than me, and if I say something or tell them to do something training-wise and they see you are on board with what I say, I think it will help pave over any bumps we may have on the road.”

Hunter nodded. He noticed how close she was to him, but he didn’t think she was genuinely attracted to him. That would be unprofessional on so many levels, but there was a ten-year age difference between them. Perhaps Stella was just overly friendly. He tried not to read too much into Stella’s demeanor. Plus, at the end of the day, she was going to be his head coach for a while, and he had to respect her. Hunter did wish Stella had introduced herself to Luna. Ignoring her was rude, and he did not like that at all. He didn’t like anyone flirting with or ignoring Luna. He wanted her to be treated with respect, just as he would treat her. Hunter brought his attention back to Stella.

“Yes,” Hunter started to say to Stella.

He looked down at her hand on his shoulder, then back up at her.

“A united front,” Hunter said quickly. “We will be a united front for the rest of the team.”

Stella smiled at Hunter. She then thanked him and walked back into her office. She

sat down at her desk and put her feet up. She smiled to herself.

A united front with Hunter meant spending more time with him. He would be hers in no time. She would make sure of that.

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Luna felt utterly humiliated by Hunter and ashamed that she had allowed it to happen. She replayed the scene in her mind, feeling the sting of betrayal with each thought. How could Hunter have stood there, letting Stella—someone who clearly held no respect for Luna—flirt with him so openly? The fact that Stella was in a position of authority made it even worse. It felt like a power play designed to make Luna feel small and insignificant. And it worked. Stella was living in her head, rent-free, as if her presence in Hunter's life loomed over Luna like a shadow she couldn't escape.

She had felt that Stella didn't like her. It was obvious in the small, cutting comments and how she dismissed Luna's presence. But to see her act so boldly, blatantly flirting with Hunter in front of her, felt like a punch to the gut. It wasn't just cold—it was cruel. Luna couldn't understand what Stella hoped to gain. Did she truly think she could win Hunter over? And worse, did Hunter want that?

Luna's mind spiraled with doubts. Why hadn't Hunter done more to show disinterest? Why had he just stood there, allowing the situation to unfold? Was there something about Stella that he found attractive? Did he secretly want her, even after everything he had shared with Luna? The flood of questions seemed endless, each one making her feel more insecure than the last.

But she knew she couldn't let her emotions show. Adam was with her, and she didn't want him to sense her turmoil. He was perceptive, and the last thing she needed was for him to start asking questions she wasn't ready to answer. She forced a smile, keeping her tone light, pretending everything was fine, even as her heart raced and her thoughts swirled. All she wanted was to hide how much it hurt, but the ache in her chest was impossible to ignore.

By the time Luna had returned to Hunter's apartment with Adam, frustration had gotten the better of her. She was disappointed with how Stella treated her at the training center. She acted as if she didn't even exist! What angered Luna even more was that Hunter didn't introduce her. She understood that Stella was his boss, technically. Still, she hoped she mattered enough to him to demand that she was treated with basic respect. Why didn't he introduce her to Stella? Was he ashamed of her? Did he care more about Stella than her? I mean, she was his coach, and Luna was just his nanny, whom he occasionally fucked. There were no labels or important titles between them. Maybe that's all she was to Hunter. Maybe all that he saw of her was a good lay. She hoped she was wrong, but she didn't know if time would be on her side while she waited to find out.

Luna put Adam to bed and sat in the living room. She had a book in her hand, and she tried to focus on the words on each page, but her mind prevented her from relaxing. She eagerly waited for Hunter to come home. She felt disrespected. Hunter, who had rescued her from a disrespectful situation when she was on the worst date of her life, should have known better.

He portrayed himself as someone who held others to a higher standard, particularly regarding women. So, why didn't he speak up when Stella blatantly ignored her and acted like she was a second-class citizen? He sure as hell didn't have a problem whisking her away when Henry was flirting with her. So, he could be jealous but not do anything about his jealousy. That infuriated Luna.

Finally, she heard the door open. She continued to sit on the couch with the book in her hand. She pretended to read. Usually, Luna got up to greet Hunter, as soon as he arrived home. However, this evening, he would have to come to her. He needed to acknowledge her, even if Stella wouldn't.

Hunter walked into the living and saw Luna reading. He saw the stern look on her face and hesitated for a moment.

“How was the rest of your day with Adam?” Hunter finally asked, breaking the ice.

He could still feel the tension in the air. It was obvious that Luna was upset about something, but he had no idea what was causing her to be so upset.

“Fine,” Luna said curtly. “Adam is fast asleep.”

She did not even bother looking at Hunter. She abruptly closed her book, grabbed her purse and jacket, and headed toward the door. Hunter dropped his gym bag on the floor and walked after her.

“You’re leaving so soon?” Hunter asked hurriedly. “Usually, we talk about each other’s day and how Adam was before you go. Why are you in such a rush today?”

“I’m not in a rush,” Luna said sharply. “You’re here, you’re home now, my shift is over, and I’d like to leave unless there’s something else you need me to do.”

Now, Hunter was starting to get agitated. He had never seen her like this before. She was so disturbed that not only was she pushing him away from her emotionally, but she was also acting kind of rude. It had been a long day, filled with a roller coaster of emotions, and Hunter’s patience was wearing thin.

Hunter said with a hint of an attitude. “Well, I need you to tell me what is wrong. Don’t beat around the bush with me. Come on, tell me what is bothering you. Please?”

Luna sighed. She unclenched her fist and turned her body towards Hunter. He seemed genuinely concerned. She thought about how to explain her frustrations to Hunter.

“You couldn’t even introduce me,” she finally said to Hunter with tears in her eyes. “I was right there, taking care of your son, and you couldn’t even introduce me. She

acted like I didn't exist, and you didn't do anything about it."

"Who in the world are you talking about?" Hunter asked.

"Stella!" she exclaimed. "Your new head coach that loves your attention!" she added.

He didn't understand why it would upset her so much. Why didn't she just introduce herself? Also, why was she so upset? Stella had to talk to him; she was his head coach, after all. The two of them had to communicate with one another. Did he wonder if she flirted with him? Sure. Yet, at the end of the day, he didn't think Stella would actually act on her feelings for him. Oh, how very wrong he would be. He just didn't know that yet, and neither did Luna.

Luna was trying to keep her voice down, as she knew Adam was asleep, but her emotions were rising.

"We have had sex, Hunter," she said, trying to reason with him. "No matter what, we have been intimate with each other, regardless of how we label it, and I work for you, taking care of your son. I get that she is your head coach, but she blatantly ignored me, and you should have introduced me. It made me feel like you were ashamed of me like I was nothing more than the nanny and the help around here." Hunter felt like he had failed Luna and did not want her to feel discarded or unimportant. He was so focused on trying to interpret Stella's flirtatious signals and subtly telling her through his body language that he was not sexually interested in her that he did not notice how the situation may have made Luna uncomfortable.

"I didn't mean to upset you, Luna," Hunter pleaded. "I honestly didn't think it was a big deal."

"You didn't think it was a big deal?" she angrily questioned. "You didn't think that it was a big deal that I had to watch a woman, who you work with, blatantly flirt with

you and then ignore me?”

“Blatantly flirt?” Hunter repeated.

He knew Stella had been flirting with him, but Luna’s observation confirmed it. He was now more concerned that she seemed jealous that Stella was flirting with him. Did Luna want him, like he still wanted her?

“Are you jealous Stella was flirting with me?” Hunter directly asked Luna. “Is that why you are so upset right now?”

“Jealousy has nothing to do with it, Hunter,” she replied defensively. “Your boss was hitting on you while ignoring the nanny because she saw herself as more than me. The whole situation was gross, and after saying that, I will be leaving now!”

She rushed out the door, and Hunter ran down the hall after her. Luna reached down to press the button to signal the elevator to open, and just as the doors opened, she felt Hunter’s hand on her arm. He pulled her into him and kissed her passionately.

“I like that you were jealous,” Hunter said seductively. “I was jealous when Henry was talking to you. I didn’t like it. I didn’t like it one bit. Now, come here.”

Hunter passionately kissed Luna again. He took her hand and quietly led her back into his apartment. He shut the door behind them and pinned her against the wall. He had been waiting so long for this moment and had fantasized about her so many times at night, remembering the last time they were intimate with one another. He needed to be inside her and needed to feel her warmth. He needed her to give him his own release. Luna’s hands were pinned above her head against the kitchen wall.

Luna moaned and then remembered she had to be quiet as it was late at night. She managed to break her hands free, and she reached for Hunter’s manhood. She took

off his belt and threw it on the kitchen floor. She unzipped his pants before reaching her hand down his jeans to grab his erection. She moved her hands up and down his hard penis and listened to him moan. She loved making him feel good.

Meanwhile, Hunter grabbed her hips and forced her around so her back was towards him. She didn't wait for him to take control. Luna slid her own pants down so her bare bum was facing Hunter. He reached down and touched her vagina. His hand rubbed back and forth on her clit before sliding his fingers inside to see how wet she was. He moaned again when he felt her sweet release.

Luna felt so good. Feeling Hunter touch her most intimate parts was what her dreams had been made of the last few months. She remembered when she had to touch herself in the shower to stop the thoughts of him from entering her mind. Finally, feeling him in person felt almost too good to be true. She begged Hunter to finger her harder. Hunter obliged her sexual request, and he listened to her moan with pleasure from his hand. He couldn't wait to make her moan with pleasure from his hard cock. He couldn't take the suspense anymore. The foreplay was over.

Hunter grabbed his dick and pressed up and down to himself. He wanted to make sure he was nice and hard for her before he made Luna reach her orgasm. She looked back over her shoulder and watched as he touched himself. It made her even wetter. Luna reached down and touched herself until Hunter was ready to enter her. He wanted to become one with her. He had been thinking about taking her for months, and she had thought the same of him. Finally, it was happening. They were in complete awe and ecstasy for one another.

When Luna felt Hunter enter her, she felt a mixture of pleasure and pain. Hunter was well endowed, and his dick filled every part of her pussy. She leaned her head back as Hunter went back and forth against her body. She gripped the wall in front of her while Hunter gripped each side of her hips. Hunter watched as her ass bounced on and off of him. It all felt so good. It all felt too good.

“Cum for me, Luna,” Hunter begged her. “Cum for me, baby, so that I can cum too. I need to cum so badly.”

Hearing how badly Hunter wanted to finish excited her. Usually, she made sure he came outside of her, but there was something about that moment. There was something about how excited each of them was. Perhaps she liked that he was jealous when Henry flirted with her, and she knew he liked it when she was envious of Stella throwing herself all over him. They were each marking their territory, and they wanted each other's, even if they did not verbalize it yet. They felt possessive of one another, even if there were no official labels.

Luna came all over Hunter's hard cock. It was the longest and most intense orgasm of her life. She moaned in pleasure so loudly that Hunter had to stick his fingers in her mouth to keep her from waking Adam, as well as the neighbors. As soon as he was sure Luna had finished, Hunter let himself experience a sweet release.

“I want to feel you finish inside of me,” Luna pleaded. “Please, baby. Please, baby, cum inside me.”

With her whispered words, Hunter finished inside of her vagina. It had been so long since he'd felt the raw intimacy of being so deeply connected to someone, and Luna felt like the perfect match. Her body wrapped perfectly around his dick, wrapping him in warmth. His moan of pleasure filled the room as the release washed over him, leaving them both to lose track of time. The only thing that mattered now was how perfectly their bodies fit together.

After they both had climaxed, they both stood in the kitchen, catching their breath. They each dressed themselves slowly, trying to comprehend what had just happened. Their silent promise to be professional with one another was forgotten in a moment's lapse of passion. Yet, neither of them felt immediate remorse about the situation. Perhaps tomorrow would bring regret, but for now, they just knew that they belonged

to one another, even if for a moment.

Luna debated whether or not she should dress and leave. She secretly wanted to spend the night with Hunter, but she didn't want to push or make him feel uncomfortable. They were not officially together, after all. When they were done making love, they stared at one another, uncomfortable for a few seconds. Where did they go from here? Who would make the next move? They both wanted the same thing, to spend the night together, but both of them had a hard time being vulnerable to the other. Thankfully, Hunter took control of the situation. He was good at doing that when he chose to do so.

“What are you doing?” Hunter asked Luna as she started to grab her belongings after quickly dressing herself. “Why don't you stay the night with me? Will you please stop gathering your things?”

“Are you sure?” Luna asked. “Are you sure you don't mind?”

These questions hurt Hunter. Luna was not someone he thought he could just use. He cared very deeply about her. It was only the complications of their situation that caused her to, at times, take a pause. Of course, he wanted her to stay. Why would she ask such a question? Did he give off a user vibe or mentality?

“I hope you know that I do not take you for granted, Luna,” Hunter told her softly.

He walked over to her trembling body. Luna was trembling from ecstasy and the confusion surrounding their situation. He gently touched her hand as she placed it on top of her purse.

“Please,” Hunter started to say. “Please, stay with me.”

Luna nodded. No other words needed to be said. If nothing else happened, they had

tonight. They made love, and now, they could lie in each other's arms. Luna followed Hunter back to the bedroom. She placed her belongings on the nightstand beside the side of the bed she slept in last time.

“Do you want to take a shower?” Hunter asked. “Maybe we could help clean one another.”

The look on his face was seductive and loving at the same time. Perhaps, he did like Luna for more than just her body. She liked to think so, at least.

“Do you like the water hot or cold?” Luna asked coyly. “Because I like it hot, and that's the only way a shower together can work.

There was a slight laugh in her voice. She was genuinely happy. Perhaps it was the pheromones from phenomenal sex, or maybe, just maybe, it was love that was brewing on the sidelines between a career nanny and a full-time professional hockey player. Would the latter be possible? Only time would tell the two of them.

Hunter walked into his bathroom and started the shower. The steam started forming almost immediately. He looked back at Luna and gave her a smirk.

“Who doesn't like hot showers?” Hunter asked with a laugh.

It was nice that they could be playful with one another. The playful banter deepened their connection, and it would also make tomorrow more difficult. The thought of this made Luna speak to Hunter from underneath the shower faucet.

“So...” Luna started to say politely. “So, what happens tomorrow?”

“What do you mean?” Hunter replied with an even-answered question.

“Tomorrow,” Luna subtly responded. “What happens tomorrow when we wake up from this dream?”

“Tomorrow is a new day,” Hunter said softly. “What do you want from tomorrow?”

“I want us to be normal,” Luna said softly, not knowing exactly what that meant. “I just don’t want to disrupt the normal day-to-day operations of what we have here.

“Well,” Hunter started to say. “Tomorrow has not come yet, and we can wait until tomorrow to be professional again.”

Luna did not know if this response was a blessing or a curse. She was thankful for this moment, but at the same time, she wanted more out of life.

She wanted more from Hunter. She wanted a commitment. But she did not know if she had a right to be upset about this thought. She knew she agreed to care for Adam, and from her own words, Adam came first. She agreed to take care of him without Hunter's commitment. All she needed was a commitment to herself. Yet, she found herself randomly wanting more from Hunter.

“So, you want me to stay the night,” Luna said thoughtfully.

She desperately hoped that Hunter wanted her to stay. She did not know how she would take it if Hunter kicked her out within mere moments of making her cum. That would not sit right with her.

She stepped into the shower and decided to let the rest of her intrusive thoughts go to the wind.

“Tonight,” she said happily. “At least you and I have tonight. We can figure out the rest tomorrow.”

“Tomorrow isn’t here yet” Hunter said again intriguingly. “Now, let me wash the scent of me off of you, baby.”

She stepped into the shower and let the water wash over her. No matter what tomorrow would bring, she decided to live in the moment, at least for tonight. She let Hunter pour soap over her.

Hunter gently spread the soap across Luna’s curvy body, mesmerized as the suds glistened on her skin. He loved the intimacy of cleaning her, especially after their earlier indulgence. As his hands slid over her, he felt a surge of arousal at the contrast between dirtying her and now cleaning her.

Luna reveled in Hunter's touch, allowing him to wash her thoroughly. The warmth of the moment urged her to reciprocate. She reached for the soap bottle, pouring a generous amount into her hands. She rubbed her hands together before applying it to his body. As they washed each other, the air filled with the scent of their bodies mingling.

When it was time to dry off, they playfully took turns with the same towel, their laughter and closeness deepening the romantic atmosphere.

“Can tomorrow never come?” Luna gently asked Hunter.

Her eyes were wide open, and she was genuinely concerned about what was happening between the two of them. She wanted to be professional, but the connection between her and Hunter was undeniable. She needed to flat-out ask him what to do moving forward.

“So,” Luna said while getting herself into bed.

She wrapped the covers all around her. She wanted to appear as sweet as she could

be.

“So,” Luna repeated softly. “So, what are we?”

Hunter had a million things that he wanted to say to Luna, but his past, including his wife’s death and all the emotional burns of the women he dated before Luna, made him think twice before responding. He felt the need to guard himself, and whether that was right or wrong, he felt the instinct to shut this conversation down as soon as possible.

“Well,” Hunter said curtly to Luna. “Well, I am a professional hockey player, and you are a professional nanny. You are in charge of Adam while I train during the day. That is really all there is to this. We like each other, but at the end of the day, our roles have not changed, you know?”

Luna's teeth clenched. She felt the same way she did when Stella had overlooked her. She felt overlooked. She felt overused. Luna didn’t want to be just the nanny to Hunter. She wanted to be far more than that. She wanted actually to mean something to him. Yes, she loved Adam, but there was a very strong possibility that she was falling in love with Hunter. Yet, his reaction to her question told her everything she needed to know. He was not ready for a relationship at the moment. Only she felt as strongly as she did, and that was a flat-out shitty feeling. The relationship, however, was one-sided.

When he noticed her getting dressed, a sense of urgency filled him—was she planning to leave?

Luna quickly grabbed her pants, shirt, and shoes, her wet hair falling loosely around her face. She didn’t bother to style it, instead frantically searching for her purse. Hunter felt panic rising at the thought of her going.

“Are you leaving?” he asked with fear. “I thought you were going to stay the night with me. I thought we were going to spend tonight together, Luna. Why are you leaving?”

Luna looked at Hunter, who, at that moment, had no idea how much he had hurt her. She tried not to cry, but salty tears filled her bright eyes. Her face started to turn red. She didn't want Hunter to have the satisfaction of seeing her upset.

“Tomorrow just came today,” Luna sadly said to Hunter. “Tomorrow is right now.”

Hunter was dumbfounded. What in the world was going on? What had happened? Just moments before, he and Luna were in the shower together. Just moments before, everything was romantic between them, but now, Hunter didn't understand what had changed. Yes, he knew that he had issues being vulnerable with women after the death of his wife, but he never thought that it would cause Luna to run away from him. He didn't want to see her go. The jealousy he felt earlier that day while watching Henry flirt with her was almost too much for him to take. The thought that her storming out of his apartment could mean that Luna could be with someone else intimately not only angered him, but it also made him incredibly sad. Hunter rushed over to Luna.

“Please don't go,” Hunter pleaded with Luna. “Why don't you just explain to me what is going on? What's with the fast change”?

Luna continued to walk towards the door. As she opened the front door to the apartment, she gently looked back at Hunter and finally spoke to him. “I'm falling in love with you, but it's obvious you don't feel the same way,” she said, her voice steady yet vulnerable. “To you, I'm just the nanny and a quick fling. That's what's wrong, Hunter.” Her words were filled with a mix of longing and frustration as she searched his eyes for a sign of the connection she desperately craved.

He watched as she closed the front door, and just like that, Luna was out of his apartment and, more importantly, out of his arms for now. He walked back to his bedroom and lay down on his bed. He thought about how Luna had said that she loved him. He thought about how he, too, had feelings for her, but saying the word love to someone meant a huge commitment. Laying there, memories of his deceased wife flooded his mind.

The two of them were so happy, and it was incredibly unfair that life had taken her from him and their son, Adam. He wondered if he had ever gotten over his wife's death, and within seconds of contemplating this, Hunter was quite sure that the answer to this lingering question was no. Sure, he had been with other women, but, emotionally opening up to them, that was a more complicated thing to do.

The thought of Luna entered his mind again. There was something different about her. When he was with her, he felt so many things all at once. The thought of losing her scared him, but telling her that he loved her and wanted a commitment from her was just as much, if not scarier. Hunter just didn't know if he was ready for all of that. Everything was happening so fast.

He thought it was best to just go to sleep as he had a long day ahead of him tomorrow. They were doing new training, and Hunter had to be on his best game. He would also be working closely with Stella and would need to be situationally aware to dodge all her advances. As Hunter closed his eyes, Luna lay in her bed, crying that tomorrow had already come.

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The next morning, Luna showed up at Hunter's apartment with swollen eyes. Her entire face was puffy from crying off and on all night. She didn't want him to see how bad she looked. So, she dug into her purse and found a pair of old sunglasses. She placed them on her face and was thankful for this newfound disguise.

She walked into the apartment and walked straight to Adam's room. He was still asleep and she decided to get breakfast made ahead of time. She started looking for eggs and bacon in the refrigerator. As she started making breakfast, she heard Hunter walk up behind her.

"You are wearing sunglasses," Hunter said inquisitively. "You are wearing sunglasses inside. Well, you must have slept as well as me.

Luna quickly turned around and looked at Hunter. He still looked handsome, and there were no dark eyes or places of puffiness on his face. She huffed before turning back to making food.

"You look like you slept just fine," Luna said. "You don't look tired at all."

Hunter walked up to Luna's back. He smelled her hair. The scent of her overwhelmed him. He whispered gently in her ear.

"I can't say what you want me to say right now," Hunter said softly. "It has nothing to do with you and everything to do with me. Can you please just be patient?"

She closed her eyes in deep thought, and she breathed heavily. His touch made her uneasy, and as she was about to reply to him, she heard the pitter-patter of little feet

come into the kitchen. Hunter, too, heard the sounds and quickly backed away from Luna to create a sense of space between their two bodies. Adam walked into the kitchen, and although he was young, he could still see that there was something between his father and Luna. Perhaps it was just a child's curiosity, but Adam asked what was going on.

“Is Luna your new special friend?” he asked his dad.

Hunter was shocked and did not know how to respond. Thankfully, before he had to, Luna intervened in the situation.

"Adam, I'm so glad you're awake! I've been cooking up a storm," she said cheerfully to the child. "Are you hungry?"

Hunter watched Luna with Adam; she was such a natural mother figure. He enjoyed watching Luna be maternal and watching Adam have a proper mother figure in his life. He imagined she would be a good mother and possibly even better wife. Would she be a good wife to him? With that question, Hunter felt the power of vulnerability kick in again. He changed his position to relieve the discomfort and looked down at his watch; he thought now would be the perfect time to escape. She clearly had things under control here, and he had to get to work. He had a long day of training at the ice rink ahead of him. Hunter said goodbye to both of them and left, all the while wondering how Luna was going to respond to him. Was she going to wait for him?

By the time Hunter walked into the arena, his other teammates were already on the ice, working. He looked down at his watch and noticed he was about ten minutes late. He thought he had left his apartment on time, but the commotion of his complicated situation with Luna threw him off guard. He also couldn't stop wondering about whether or not Luna would continue working for him, as well as wait for him to be emotionally available to her. He shook his head and looked back down at his watch. He had to get moving.

Hunter quickly walked to the locker room and began changing into his training attire. And as he was putting on his shirt, he heard the soft voice of a female behind him. It threw him off guard, and he jerked his body around to see who was there in the male locker room. It was Stella.

“I was wondering when you were going to get here,” Stella said with a smirk. “You are about fifteen minutes late at this point.”

Hunter felt the need to be defensive. Coach or not, what was a female doing in the male locker room? That would never be okay if the situation were reversed.

“And you,” Hunter started to say defensively. “And you are in the male locker room.”

Stella laughed. This did not help the situation, and it made Hunter feel more uneasy.

“It is a male hockey team,” Stella said while laughing. “Every locker room is male. I will get out of here. I just wanted to make sure you were ready to lead today’s drills now that you are finally here.”

Hunter was thankful he had finished getting dressed before she walked into the locker room. He watched as she swayed out. She was wearing a miniskirt with tights and a long-sleeved shirt. Her outfit was set off with a pair of long, sexy black boots. She did look good, Hunter admitted to herself, but what the hell was she thinking walking into the male locker room?

That was a human resources violation and a lawsuit waiting to happen. Hunter shook his head in dismay and quickly rushed out to the ice rink. He saw Henry taking the lead on the agility drills. He walked over and joined the rest of his teammates.

“Hey, Henry,” Hunter said casually. “Hey, Henry, thank you for covering for me, man. I’m sorry I was late. I can take over now.”

Henry stepped aside and felt discarded. He thought the whole thing was ridiculous. Why wasn't he in charge of the team? He was just as talented as Hunter, and he was always on time. Tension filled the air, and Henry tried to bite his tongue, but he could not hold himself back.

"Well, just be on time tomorrow, and I won't have to cover for you," Henry told Hunter.

He spoke loudly for everyone else to hear. This bothered Hunter. It was one thing to disrespect him in general, but it was quite another thing to disrespect him in front of the whole team. Hunter turned towards Henry. He walked closer and faced him head-on.

"Is there a problem, Henry?" Hunter asked him. "Is there a problem, or did you just not get enough sleep last night?"

"Oh, I'm probably not sleeping as well as you," Henry laughed. "I am definitely not sleeping as well as you are these days."

"What the fuck is that supposed to mean?" Hunter asked angrily. "What exactly are you trying to get at?"

"I'm just saying," Henry said with his hands in the air. "I'm just saying that I would probably be sleeping in, too, if I was getting a good fuck from my hot nanny."

This comment was too far for Hunter. He couldn't stand him talking about her that way. It was disrespectful to both him and Luna.

"What the fuck are you talking about?" Hunter asked furiously, with his finger in Henry's face.

“Oh, come on, man,” Henry said defiantly. “Everyone could see the way you looked at her and how protective you were of her when I hit on her. There is no way you are not hitting that! Although, by the looks of you right now, maybe she isn’t a good lay. Maybe I dodged a pretty unimpressive bullet when you cock-blocked me from getting her number.”

Anger flowed through Hunter's veins. His face was red, and his fists were clenched. He was already close enough to hit Henry, and with one foot behind the other, his right fist moved backward and then forward to his face. Before he knew what was happening, Hunter had punched Henry violently.

Other teammates rushed over to him to help pick Henry up off the ice while other teammates got themselves in between Hunter and Henry to stop the fight from escalating even further. It is true that hockey is a violent sport, and it was not uncommon for fights to break out on the ice. However, it was unusual for fights to break out amongst team members. These team members were supposed to be good friends, but Henry and Hunter had no friendship. There was only anger and competition, male competition.

Henry was behind a sea of other team members, but he desperately wanted to get in front of them to hit Hunter back. His nose was bleeding. Hunter did not care if he had broken Henry’s nose. He shouldn’t have talked to him that way. He should not have talked about Luna that way.

Hunter assured his teammates that he was good and would no longer fight. He furiously walked back to the locker room. He felt like a failure. Things were not going well in his emotional or professional life. He felt that he had messed up every good thing in his life.

As he sat down on a bench in the locker room, he debated whether or not he needed to take the day off. Tension was high amongst the team. That was obvious. Maybe it

would be best for him not to be present at the arena today.

Hunter gathered himself and walked to Stella's office. He knocked once before walking in. Before arriving at her office, he had peeked back onto the ice. Other assistants had gotten the team training again. That was one good thing about hockey: physical fights were quickly forgotten. He waited for Stella to give him the okay to walk in.

He was surprised to find Stella with her heels on the desk. She looked serious. He could not tell if she was angry or not. It was always so hard to read her.

"Close the door behind you," Stella ordered Hunter. "Come over here and sit down."

Hunter slowly walked over and sat down in the empty chair in front of Stella's desk, which her legs were still on top of. In fact, if he focused his gaze, he could see her underwear showing from underneath her miniskirt. He couldn't help but stare for a moment when he noticed this. Stella noticed and slightly moved her legs.

He wondered if Stella was showing him her lingerie on purpose or not. Hunter was embarrassed; he didn't want to be known in the world of hockey as someone who started physical altercations over nothing, but he could not have Henry talk about Luna that way. Plus, he was already in a bad mood, and Henry's comments simply added fuel to the fire.

He hung his head down low and waited for Stella to start the conversation. She was his boss, after all, and no matter the strangeness between them, he didn't want her to be disappointed in him.

"So," Stella said thoughtfully as she brought her legs back to the floor. "So, there was a fight, and you threw the first punch."

“I threw the only punch,” Hunter said proudly.

He was happy that Henry did not have an opportunity to hit him back. That all meant that Hunter had won the fight. Winning fights was important in hockey.

Stella laughed.

“I can’t have my men fighting, Hunter,” she said seriously. “You know that. This is not your first season. From what the others told me, Henry was asking for it, and thank goodness the team has seemed to let today’s earlier events go quickly. However, what happened this morning cannot happen again.”

Hunter nodded and was thankful that Stella was not chastising him too hard about the events. Very few people liked Henry, and he bet that helped him in this case.

“Don’t be late tomorrow, and don’t start a fight,” Stella said seriously.

Hunter nodded in agreement. He noticed Stella lean forward on her desk. Her shirt was slightly unbuttoned, and her cleavage was showing. Hunter saw a hint of a red bra, the same color as her panties. It seemed that Stella was, in fact, trying to make herself seen by Hunter on purpose. Was she seducing him?

“You have a lot on your mind,” Stella said seductively. “What if you did not have to think about anything for a few minutes? How would that make you feel?”

“Well, what exactly do you mean?” Hunter asked Stella.

He could not lie to himself; Stella was an attractive older woman, and she did not strike him as the type of woman who wanted a serious relationship. A fling with her would be straightforward. There would be no hidden messages or emotions. He cared about Luna, but maybe something simpler was what he needed, even if it was only

for a moment. He stared at Stella's breasts again. She noticed his gaze and smiled.

"Did you see something that you like?" Stella asked Hunter.

Hunter remained silent as he sat in his chair, uncomfortable. He was uncomfortable with the fact that he still had feelings for Luna and could not act on them due to his past. He was also uncomfortable that he was turned on by Stella at that moment. Could anyone blame him? He was a man, after all, and as far as he knew, things with Luna were done.

He didn't know what to say or do, and he felt like he was in a lose-lose situation. What would feel good in the moment would hurt Luna later if she ever found out about it. On the other hand, Stella was his boss, and refusing her would look bad on him. Was this quid pro quo?

He shook his head to himself; he didn't think so. It was true that he found Stella attractive, and there was a part of him who wanted this to happen. He had noticed her looking at him off and on throughout the months, and at first, he tried to fight off her flirtatious behavior.

However, now he was wondering if she could really make him feel good and forget everything that was happening. Would a little impulse control be a bad thing? He also wondered if all of him would fit in Stella's mouth.

He just needed to feel good. So, what if his judgment was clouded? Did it really matter? If things were salvageable for him and Luna. She didn't need to know about this situation.

"Would you like me to make you feel better?" Stella seductively asked.

Hunter nodded his head up and down. He was going to do this.

“We only have a few moments,” Stella said. “So, we have to make this quick.”

Hunter understood. He looked behind him to make sure the blinds on the door were closed.

“They are closed,” Stella said to him, reading his mind. “Just go lock the door quickly.”

Hunter stood up and walked over to the door and locked it, and when he turned around, he saw that Stella had unbuttoned her blouse entirely.

Her skirt was up, and he saw her matching red lingerie set. Hunter immediately got hard.

“I see you are excited already,” she said seductively. “Why don’t you unzip your pants so I can taste how hard you are.”

Hunter reached down and unbuckled his belt, then unbuttoned his pants and unzipped them, but then something came over him. His body stiffened. What was he doing? He cared about Luna, and even though they were not officially together, he did not want to be with anyone else. This was nothing more than temptation. He quickly got up from his seat.

“Come here,” Stella said. “Sit down, here.”

“I can’t do this,” Hunter said seriously. “This was a mistake. This is not appropriate. You are my head coach! I’m so sorry, but this is a mistake.”

“Oh, don’t be like that, Hunter,” “Come here, let me make you feel good.”

“No,” Hunter seriously stated. “This never happened.”

While Hunter was debating being intimate with Stella, outside on the ice rink, Luna walked in with Adam. She had brought Adam to see her father as a surprise. She was also hoping to be able to tell him her answer to his question earlier this morning. She wanted to tell Hunter that she was going to wait for him. She knew waiting would be hard, but she cared deeply about him and thought this was the best thing to do.

She looked down on the ice and didn't see him playing anywhere, but she did see Henry. Henry came up as soon as he noticed her. He really did find her attractive, and his interaction with Hunter earlier made him determined to spend at least one night with her. As soon as she saw him, she was taken aback by his swollen nose.

She immediately inquired about his nose, and Henry made up some lie on the spot, saying that he had fallen on the ice and hurt it. She didn't know if she believed his story, as he seemed nervous talking about his injury. When Luna asked where Hunter was, he said he didn't know but that he thought he had seen him in the locker room before heading to Stella's office. He asked if she wanted him to watch Adam while she went to look for him, and Luna was thankful for this offer and took him up on it.

Luna slowly walked across the ice rink down to the hallway, and when she finally got to Stella's office, she attempted to open the door and noticed that it was locked. She put her hand on the doorknob, but it would not turn. She thought about walking away, thinking for a moment that no one was in the office when she heard two people arguing.

She pressed her ear to the door and heard Hunter and Stella's voices — they were arguing. She listened carefully, then gasped as the details became clear. Hunter was having an inappropriate conversation with Stella, and they were arguing about not being intimate. Luna hadn't known that Hunter had refused Stella's advances, though it seemed he had almost given in. For all she knew, Hunter could have been with someone else, and that thought hurt her deeply. She couldn't believe what she was hearing.

Here, she had come down to tell him she was willing to wait for him. She would endure his emotional problems, but she could not endure this. She wanted to be his only one, and listening to that conversation with Stella would not work for her. It was all too much for her. Her heart was broken into a million pieces. She tried not to cry as she walked back to the ice rink.

When she made her way back to Adam and Henry, it was obvious that she was upset. She tried to keep her composure, as she did not want Adam to see her upset.

“Did you find him?” Henry asked inquisitively.

Luna nodded and sniffled at the same time. Henry noticed her cheeks were streaked. For a moment, he was genuinely concerned. Then, he realized this was his moment to step in and appear to be the knight in shining armor. He wanted to be Henry, the man to the rescue.

“I found him,” Luna finally replied. “He is very busy, though. This isn’t a great time for us to see him at work. Adam, it is time to go.”

She grabbed Adam’s hand, and then he started crying. He wanted to see his father, and she wanted to get the hell out of there.

“Are you sure you can’t stay a bit longer?” Henry asked her. “I was hoping to get to know you better. How about I grab us some coffee, and we can sit and chat until Hunter is free?”

Luna knew what Henry was doing. She was not a stupid woman, but the idea of getting back at Hunter brought joy to her soul. What the hell? She could stay for a cup of coffee and a conversation. Adam continued to cry. She leaned down and hugged him. She told him they would stay and see Hunter. Adam calmed down and began playing with some toys Luna had brought to keep him occupied.

Henry left and got coffee from the break room. On his way out, he noticed Hunter walking out of Stella's office. He looked frazzled. Henry thought it was odd. Why was the door locked? Why was he speaking to Stella? The whole thing was odd. Hunter's face was flushed, and Henry slowly walked behind him, carrying Luna's coffee. Hunter was too frazzled to notice that someone was behind him.

Hunter walked back to the rink and joined his team. They were taking a break from training. He looked up when he heard his son yell for him. He then noticed Luna and Adam sitting in the stands. What were they doing here? The timing was horrible. He felt like he had cheated on Luna, even though he was not in a committed relationship with her, and he hadn't touched Stella.

Besides, the thing with Stella would never happen again. He put a firm, professional boundary. If she didn't want a lawsuit, Stella would not proposition him again. He just had a momentary lapse, right? That is what he told himself, anyway. He stared back up at them. He saw Adam pointing in his direction and decided he had to go up and say hello. He was genuinely happy to see his son and Luna. He just needed to act normally. His guilty conscience was getting the best of him.

As he started walking towards them, he noticed Henry giving Luna a cup of coffee. What the hell was that? Henry should know better, especially after the physical altercation they had had earlier, to stay away from Luna. He tried to tell himself it was just a cup of coffee, but then he saw him sit down and begin talking to her. They seemed to be hitting it off. Both of them were laughing and smiling. He needed to intervene and fast.

Hunter quickly walked up to where they were sitting. Luna was surprised to see him. Adam ran to his father, and Hunter picked him up and held him in his arms. He knew there would not be a second altercation if he was holding his child. No one would stoop that low.

As Hunter held Adam, Luna and Henry continued to talk amongst themselves. She did not even acknowledge him. He thought that was odd. He also noticed her eyes were a tad puffy, almost like she had been crying. She took another sip of her coffee and made a deliberate attempt not to look Hunter in the eye. She felt betrayed by him.

Hunter, out of guilt, let the conversation between her and Henry continue. He took Adam down to the ice and let him play with a puck and a hockey stick. It felt good to have his son with him. If only he could get the rest of his personal life in order.

Suddenly, he saw Stella walk out onto the ice. She looked disappointed. Hunter noticed this and thought she had no choice but to get over it. He was mad at himself for allowing her to tempt him and even more upset that he almost was intimate with her. Thank goodness he still had some self-control left.

“I see a lot of players standing around!” She yelled. “Everyone on the line, and give me drill number six!”

That was everyone’s cue to get back to work. They had been taking a break for too long, and their first game of the season was right around the corner. Hunter brought Adam back to Luna, who said goodbye to Henry and thanked him for the coffee.

“Thanks for bringing him by,” Hunter said to her.

It was the first time they looked each other in the eye since earlier that morning. Luna remained silent. He knew something was wrong, and even though the door was locked and the windows were shut, he worried she knew the truth. He did not know how he would get himself out of the situation he had just created for himself. He watched as they walked away,

“Hunter!” Stella yelled from the ice rink. “Hunter, get your ass on the ice and give me drill number six now! Come on, let’s move!”

Hunter ran down to the ice and started practicing with the team. What a hell of a day, he thought to himself. Regret and anxiety filled his body. He had to do what he always did when bad things happened. He had to leave everything on the ice.

Luna and Adam arrived back at the apartment. By that time, it was lunch, and she began preparing a meal for herself and Adam. What a day it had already turned out to be. She could not believe Hunter had sex with Stella. She knew they were not officially a couple. Still, she felt a strong connection between them, and the thought of him nonchalantly being with someone else right after he had asked her to wait for him to be emotionally available was unbelievable to her.

What did waiting for him mean? Did it mean letting him walk all over her? Did it mean letting him use her? No matter how much she cared for him, she wasn't going to let that happen. She knew that she deserved to be treated better than that.

By the time evening came Luna had decided that it would be best to leave her position as Hunter's nanny. The whole situation was becoming too much. It was all too complicated, and she did not think she could handle any more drama. Her emotions were all over the place. She did not want to have this conversation with Hunter. Her heart was breaking at just the thought of talking to him, but she had to get these emotions off her chest.

The time continued to move slowly, and Hunter was still not home. Her mind wondered if he was with Stella again. The memories of the moans she heard earlier that day of the two of them having sex overwhelmed her. She wished she could leave the apartment, but she did not want to leave Adam alone. She looked at the clock again. Where was he? He was usually home by now.

Just as she was in mid-thought, she heard the front door to the apartment open. Hunter was finally home. Whether she was ready or not, it was show time. She tried to prepare herself emotionally. Luna was sitting at the kitchen table when Hunter

walked in. He immediately felt the tension in the room. His guilty conscience was still nagging at him. He was dying to know why Luna was upset, and he hoped she had not found out about the situation with Stella.

Hunter placed his gym bag on the ground and walked towards Luna slowly. He looked her straight in the face while she stared forward. She still could not even look at him. He decided perhaps small talk would lessen the tension in the room between them.

“How was your day?” he finally asked her, breaking the silence.

Luna stayed silent for a moment. She was trying to choose her words carefully.

“My day was pretty shitty,” she finally said bluntly. “My day was shitty, Hunter.”

Hunter was taken aback. He was coming to the conclusion that perhaps she did know about him and Stella, but how did she find out?

“Why did you have such a bad day?” he asked hesitantly.

“Why don’t you tell me?” Luna asked. “Why don’t you tell me why you asked me to wait for you, and then hours later, you discussed having sex with Stella?”

Hunter was taken aback. He stayed silent for a moment. She knew. He didn’t know how she knew, but she did. He was angry with himself for not being able to control his emotions. Did he lie about it? Did he deny everything? Hunter contemplated what was the best thing to do. Then, he looked at Luna.

She was obviously crushed. He knew what he had to do. Although he didn’t want to do it, he knew it was the best thing to do, given the circumstances. If he ever wanted to be with Luna in the future, if he ever wanted her back again that is, then he had to

be honest with her. He had to lay everything out on the kitchen table.

Hunter took a seat next to Luna. He tried to reach over and grab her hand, but she shifted her body away from him.

“It was stupid,” Hunter said seriously. “I had a momentary lapse. I don’t know why I almost did it, and I won’t do it again, Luna. Nothing happened with her! I swear! It was only a temptation.”

“Do you love her?” she asked him honestly.

“No,” Hunter replied immediately. “No, of course, I do not.”

“Do you love anyone?” she asked in retaliation.

This question took him off guard. Vulnerability was not his specialty, but he knew that he had to be vulnerable right now. He took a deep breath before answering her question.

“I don’t know,” Hunter finally stated honestly. “I don’t know, Luna. My whole personal life has been a mess since my wife died. I loved her, and when she passed, I didn’t know if it was possible or appropriate to ever fall in love with someone again. That’s why I go back and forth, and it’s why I seem so distant at times. I know that I give mixed signals, but I am confused about what is okay for me to do. Even though she is gone, I feel like I am betraying her.”

"Then why did you flirt with your head coach, of all people?" she asked bluntly, unable to hold back any longer.

The words hung in the air between them, heavy with accusation and frustration. Luna hadn’t planned on being so direct, but the question had been gnawing at her for too

long. She needed answers. She needed to understand why he had allowed such an inappropriate dynamic to unfold. It wasn't just anyone—it was his head coach, someone with authority over him, someone who should have been off-limits. The thought of it infuriated her.

Her heart raced as she waited for his response, eyes locked on his, searching for any hint of regret or explanation. She didn't want excuses; she wanted the truth, no matter how much it might hurt.

“I guess I was just trying to escape the madness of everything,” he stated. “I know it wasn't right, but I was not thinking clearly. I know that I hurt you, but in my mind, that conversation with her was an escape to just feel good for a moment. Plus, nothing happened between us. Sure, I enjoyed the flirting for a moment, but in the end, I turned her down. I told her that I wasn't interested. I just wanted to feel good about myself for a moment. Is that really a crime?”

This last comment hurt Luna. She wondered if she didn't make him feel good enough. Her self-confidence dropped. This was all too complicated. Was he worth it? She did not know. She tried to hold back her tears. Hunter noticed she was becoming emotional.

He hated seeing her upset, but he also couldn't help but think that his feelings were valid. His life had become drastically more complicated after the death of his wife. She didn't understand that because she had never lost a spouse. How could she possibly understand what he was thinking or feeling?

Then, he wondered if Luna's lack of understanding was his fault. He had not opened up to her, and maybe he should have been more open about how he felt. So, Hunter decided to do something he was not used to doing; he decided to be vulnerable with a woman.

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Hunter made some coffee. It was obvious that it was going to be a long night, and he wanted to make sure that both he and Luna were attentive to this conversation. It was an important conversation, and regardless of how uncomfortable each of them was, it was a talk they had to have with one another. The situation between them had become more complicated than necessary, and there were other people to consider. The bottom line was that they needed to figure out their situation to ensure Adam's stability. Thank goodness he remained asleep during their conversation.

Luna still looked sad, and Hunter himself did not look too good, either. He poured two coffee cups full to the brim and placed one cup in front of himself and the other in front of Luna. He sat down at the kitchen table with her and prepared himself to be as emotionally vulnerable as he could. He had to do this, he told himself. Perhaps being vulnerable would make this whole mess of a situation worth it.

He cared about her, and he didn't want to lose her, no matter how messed up he was. No matter how many mistakes he had made, he wanted to keep Luna in his life in whatever fashion she felt comfortable with. He knew that she had to be feeling betrayed and confused, and while all of those emotions were valid, he hoped that she could at least try to understand where he was coming from, how losing a wife he loved very much so suddenly and unexpectedly could make him behave so irrationally when emotions such as love were involved.

Hunter looked at Luna. They gently smiled at each other; they knew that the other felt uncomfortable, and deep down, they wanted to ease that discomfort a bit. Luna reached her hand out and gently held Hunter's hand. This small act of kindness deeply touched him. Perhaps there was hope for them as a couple, yet.

“I need to tell you about my wife,” Hunter said. “I think losing her is the cause of all my issues with vulnerability and my tendency to make relationships more complicated than necessary. I know I hurt you, but I would really appreciate it if you would listen to me right now.”

Luna picked up her coffee and nodded. There was something heartfelt about his words, and she believed him. It did not erase her hurt, but she was open to hearing what he had to say to her.

“I am listening,” she replied softly. “Go ahead.”

Hunter spilled his soul to Luna and told her everything. He explained how he had met his wife in college, how they fell madly in love, how she supported his career in professional hockey playing, and how she was his biggest fan. He told her how they traveled the world together. He described his former wife as an adventurous, kind spirit who genuinely loved him unconditionally and fully.

When they had Adam, it was the most incredible day of their lives together. His birth brought them even closer together as a couple. Still, when she unexpectedly died in a car crash, when she wasn't even driving, but she was in the backseat of a cab, he felt like he had lost the best part of himself.

Adam was still young when she died. He was practically still a newborn. Hunter had to learn how to become a father and a mother quickly, and there was really no time for him to mourn his wife's passing.

Losing his head coach this season brought back a flood of painful emotions for Hunter, emotions he thought he had buried. His coach had been there for him during the most difficult time of his life, showing up at the hospital repeatedly to visit Hunter's wife, who was in a coma after the accident.

After she passed away, his coach frequently checked in on both Adam and him, offering support when Hunter had no one else to turn to. It had been a long and emotional journey, and throughout it all, his coach had been his only confidant.

For a while, they had held out hope that his wife might wake up from the coma. Doctors weren't certain, but there were moments when they believed she could pull through. But in the end, her mind was gone. Hunter had to face the devastating truth that keeping her alive felt inhumane.

Her body was still there, but the vibrant, loving person he had married was no longer present. The hardest decision of his life came when he had to choose to stop the machines that were keeping her alive. Sometimes, even now, he wondered if he made the right choice.

Hunter felt an overwhelming wave of guilt. Although he wasn't responsible for the car accident that had led to her coma, he couldn't escape the fact that he was the one who decided to pull the plug. Logically, he knew it was the right thing to do — her brain had been irreparably damaged, and there was no hope for recovery.

He knew deep down that his wife would have wanted him to move on, to find love again, but the idea of being with another woman, of committing himself to someone new, was almost unbearable. The thought of falling in love again made the guilt even worse as if he was betraying her memory by doing so. Every time the possibility crossed his mind, it overwhelmed him, making it impossible to consider a future with anyone else.

This guilt created a barrier between him and the people he cared about, driving him to detach emotionally. No matter how much he longed for connection, the remorse always caused him to pull away, leaving him isolated and alone, even when he didn't want to be.

Luna listened intently to every word that Hunter said. Hearing his past in detail made everything make so much more sense. Although she still felt betrayed by him, understanding the reasons behind his irrational thinking and reckless behavior made her understand him more. If anything, she had more empathy for him, and it was hard to stay angry at him.

However, the other part of her knew that she could not handle constantly being in an emotional limbo in this relationship. She did not want to cause him more turmoil, but she also had to think about what she deserved as a woman. She did not want to find out in a couple of weeks or a month later that Hunter was with someone else.

She was sure that she was falling in love with him if she was not in love with him already. Although she knew that he was not in a place to say those words to her back, she wanted to know that she would be the only one in his life. Yet, based on this conversation, she wasn't. Hunter was still in love with his deceased wife; even if she was no longer here, in this world, she still had possession of Hunter's heart.

Luna knew that she had to respect this. The life of a widower, who was also a single father, was complicated and deeply emotional. Her thoughts drifted back to Adam. Adam had been through so much at a young age, and he didn't even fully understand what he had been through.

It would not be until he was older that he would fully be able to grasp the concept of the emotional trauma he had endured as a young baby. She wanted to be there for Adam; she felt a natural maternal instinct for him. Adam and Luna had become close, as if they were mother and son, over the past few months, and she did not want to leave him high and dry.

She also knew that leaving her position as a nanny would cause more stress for Hunter during the hockey season, which was a significant part of his life. So, she decided to set things straight in a direct way. She contemplated her words for a brief

moment before speaking.

“I appreciate you telling me all of this,” she said respectfully. “I know it is not easy for you to open up, and hearing all of this really does give me a better understanding of why you are the way that you are.”

Hunter smiled. So far, everything was going well. He was glad he had this conversation with her. He knew Luna had more to say, so he patiently waited to hear her words.

“I have strong feelings for you, Hunter,” she said honestly. “I know you are not in a position to reciprocate these feelings, but I cannot emotionally handle going back and forth. I just do not have it in me to do that.”

Hunter sighed and looked at the floor. He feared that this was it. She was going to be out of his life. He was going to lose her. There would be no seeing her in the mornings or at night. He was certain she would leave her job as his nanny and poor Adam. What was he going to do? How was he going to hire another nanny under such short notice? Thankfully, she interrupted his way of thinking.

“I am going to stay as your nanny,” Luna said calmly. “I care about and love Adam. I am not going to just leave him. We both know that he needs consistency, but this, us, we can’t be going back and forth.”

Hunter nodded in agreement. Everything she said was rational and to be expected. He was just happy that she was not entirely leaving his life. If they could only be professionals, that would be better than nothing. Who knew what the future would hold? At least, now, she was still in his life.

“I know,” Hunter said sadly. “I don’t want to hurt you. That isn’t my intention at all. I just have to get my shit together, you know? I have to get my shit together and focus

on this hockey season. I feel like I have a lot on my plate.”

Luna agreed with him. This was a productive grown-up conversation. The reality was that adult relationships were naturally complicated because life was complicated. They both learned that the hard way. Each of them had dark parts of their past and had been bruised by life.

“I know we told each other this earlier,” Luna stated. “I know we have said this before, but we have to have a strictly professional relationship. If we are to be together again, I want it to be for real. If we are to be together again, I want us to be in a committed relationship.”

The two agreed and finished their coffee. When they were done, Luna picked up the empty coffee cups and placed them in the kitchen sink. She looked back at Hunter. He looked relieved, as if a weight had been lifted from him. She was thankful everything was out in the open between them. Well, almost everything was out in the open.

He knew Henry was interested in her, but he didn't know that he had given Luna his number. He didn't know that she was going to meet him after she left Hunter's apartment. In her mind, there was no need for him to know.

They were only in a professional relationship now, not a romantic one, and she was free to do whatever she wanted to do. She told Hunter goodbye and walked out of the apartment, ready to see where the night would take her.

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When Luna arrived at the bar, she saw Henry waiting for her. He saw her walk into the bar and waved her over to him. She walked towards him nervously. She did not know exactly why she was there. Perhaps she wanted to get back at Hunter for inappropriately flirting with Stella. Her feelings were hurt, and there was a part of her that wanted to hurt him. She sat down beside Henry.

He was a conventionally good-looking man, but he was nothing compared to Hunter. She already felt like she was settling for less. She smiled at Henry.

“Let me get you a drink,” Henry stated warmly. “What’s your poison?”

“Just a glass of red wine, please,” she stated happily. “I am a simple person.”

Henry looked at Luna and smiled while he tilted his head to the side.

“Oh,” Henry began to say while slightly chuckling. “I highly doubt that.”

Luna blushed. Henry definitely was not Hunter, but he was a good flirt. There was no harm in enjoying that, at least.

“What makes you say such a thing?” Luna responded with a smile.

“Well,” Henry started to say. “Someone as beautiful as you they are never simple. Real beauty always complicates things.”

Was that a compliment or an insult? Luna could not tell. Well, maybe Henry wasn’t that good of a flirt after all. Her smile faded, and she took a gulp of her wine as soon

as the bartender handed it to her. Henry noticed the change in her demeanor.

“Real beauty complicates things in the best way,” Henry said nervously, trying to cover up his mistake. “What wants a simple life, anyways? Certainly not me. Life is just too short.”

Luna smiled gently. Henry was trying his best during this date, but the chemistry was just not there. Henry, who was set on getting back at Hunter, looked at Luna and knew there was no chance they were going to get together. For a moment, he felt bad. Hunter was the star hockey player, and he always got the most beautiful girls. As jealous as he was at times, it was obvious that Luna was not into their interaction.

“Luna,” Henry stated calmly. “Luna, why are you here?”

This question took her off guard. She did not expect him to ask her such an off-the-wall question.

“Be honest,” Henry stated seriously. “Look, it has only been twenty minutes since we have been sitting here, but I think we both know that this isn’t going to go anywhere. In fact, I think you knew it wasn’t going to go anywhere before you came here.”

Luna gently nodded her head. She took another huge sip of her wine. Henry was right on the money; she had to be honest with him. He didn’t seem like he was altogether a bad guy. She at least owed him the truth about why she was there, and it was not because she wanted to be with him.

“Honestly,” she started to say. “I wanted to get back at Hunter for flirting with Stella. There was this whole thing today where they were in her office talking. She was definitely coming on to him, and I assumed he gave in, like all men do. It wouldn’t technically be cheating; we are not in a committed relationship after all. Anyways, long story short, he turned her down, but the whole thing made me angry.”

“You wanted to make him jealous,” Henry said while nodding in understanding. “So, what did he say when you told him you were coming out tonight? He does have that whole never hit on the nanny rule, you know? I am sure he wasn’t too happy about it.”

She looked down at her glass of wine.

“I didn’t even tell him,” she said, laughing.

Henry joined in with her and laughed, too. The whole thing was so complicated that it was comical.

“Well, how is he supposed to get jealous if he doesn’t even know about it?”

“You are right, Henry,” she said to him. “Ah, I am such an idiot! Especially in the love department.”

The moment she uttered the word “love,” her phone rang. She looked down and saw Hunter’s name come across her phone. Henry saw it, too.

“Talk about perfecting timing,” Henry said while taking a drink of his whiskey.

She wondered why Hunter was calling. It was getting late. She hoped nothing was wrong with Adam. She picked up the phone and answered the call.

“Yes?” Luna said over the phone.

“Luna?” Hunter stated. “I need to see you. Can you come over?”

“Is everything okay?” she asked him sincerely. “Is there something wrong? You never call me this late.”

“I just have to see you,” he said with love in his voice. “I hate how we left things. I need to see you to say what I need to in person. I know it is late, and I’m sorry. I’m always late with telling you everything you need to hear. Can you please come over?”

“I don’t know, Hunter,” she said shyly. “I don’t know if I can get my heart broken again.”

She was afraid this conversation would lead to another label-less relationship, and that was not what she wanted. She wanted Hunter, all of him.

She heard him sigh over the phone.

“I love you, Luna,” Hunter said. “I’m not saying I am going to be perfect, but I am willing to try. I love you, and I want to have a relationship with you. Can you please give me another chance? I want you to be more than my nanny. Please come back.”

She was shocked and elated to hear him say those words to her. She smiled ear to ear.

“I love you too, Hunter,” she said happily. “I will be right there.”

When she got off the phone, she reached into her purse to pay for her drink, but Henry stopped her.

This one’s on me,” he said humbly. “Go get your man.”

By the time Luna reached Hunter’s apartment, her heart was pounding. Her cheeks flushed as she thought about how many times she had imagined this moment—the moment Hunter would tell her he loved her, the moment she’d say it back, and he’d sweep her up in his arms, finally putting all their relationship troubles behind them.

Things had been complicated between them for a while, with plenty of ups and

downs, but now she felt a new sense of stability. Excitement bubbled inside her as she waited for him to open the door.

When Hunter finally did, he was speechless. She looked more beautiful than ever. He had been waiting for her to come over, and now she was here—the very thing he'd been thinking about nonstop.

“I love you,” Hunter said adoringly to Luna.

“I love you too, she replied softly to him.”

Everything was perfect. Finally, a barrier had been broken for them. Hunter had chosen to be vulnerable with her, and in the end, it was the best thing he could have done. A weight had been lifted, not just for him but for Luna as well. There were no more secrets between them, only love. Their future was now bright. It seemed that all was well in the world.

Hunter picked her up in his arms and carried her to the bedroom; he kissed her gently and took his time removing each article of her clothing. She returned the favor by gently placing her mouth all over his body. She softly took off his shirt and then his pants as he took off her undergarments.

By the time both of them were naked, the tingling sensation of their skin against each other was almost too much to bear. They could feel each of their heartbeats singing in unison. They were one at this moment. Somehow, before it was all about sex, it was primal. However, this time, they were intimate. They were connected with more than just their bodies. Their souls were intertwined. Love brought them together, making the physical interaction between them much more pleasurable.

Hunter placed himself inside Luna, and they both moaned with pleasure. He moved his body on top of her, matching the movements of her hips. All he wanted to do was

please her, feel her, let her know that she was his and he was hers. Luna wrapped her legs around Hunter's waist and pushed him deeper into her body.

She dug her fingernails into his body, and then Hunter kissed Luna's neck. He ran his fingers through her hair. The two of them made love all night, and this time, the two of them spent the rest of the night lying in each other's arms when they were finished.

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The months following the start of Hunter and Luna's committed relationship were filled with love and adoration. Luna accompanied Hunter to all of his games away from the city. She continued to look after Adam and took him with her to all of his games.

The bond between her and Adam continued to grow, and he was starting to see her as a true mother-figure. She was beginning to love Adam like a true son. Seeing the two of them together made Hunter fall even more in love with her. He felt he finally had a happy family unit again.

Luna loved supporting Hunter. Her work around their home life was seen less as a nanny and more as a member of the family. She was happy to take care of everything while Hunter worked. She had always wanted a traditional relationship with a man, and it seemed that now, she was finally getting it. It made the work so much more worth doing, knowing that Hunter appreciated it, too.

She had to admit, though, that the fame was getting a bit too much for her to handle. She was not used to it. The success of Hunter's team was bringing a lot of attention to the city. There were many events the team had to attend, and most of the time, Luna attended the events with Hunter as long as they could find a sitter for Adam. She enjoyed being by his side, but the flashing lights and the overwhelming number of fans wanting Hunter's autograph were, at times, too much. She had no idea how famous he was when she met him.

Stella was still the head coach for the time being. Things between her and Hunter had cooled off, and they had come to a professional understanding. Thankfully, she did not hold his denial of her affection against him. In fact, he continued to work as her

right-hand man, and together, they led the team to great success. They had only lost one game all season, but with mid-season approaching, their toughest opponent was just ahead. This next game would determine the trajectory of the rest of the season. There was a lot at stake, and Hunter was feeling the pressure. He was trying not to let it affect his relationship with Adam or Luna, though.

That evening, Luna stood in the kitchen preparing dinner for Adam when she heard the door open. Hunter was home early. Normally, he didn't arrive until after dark. As he walked in, Luna greeted him with a warm smile, happy to see him in time for dinner. It was rare for the three of them to sit down together as a family.

"You are home early," Luna said with a smile. "Is there a special occasion?" she joked.

Hunter walked over to her. He put his arms around her and kissed her forehead.

"Any time I get to see you is a special occasion," he said happily. "They are giving us some time off before we head to that event in New York. You are coming with me, right? Both you and Adam are coming?"

Luna turned the stove off and started plating the food. Adam was sitting at the table.

"Daddy!" He yelled with joy! "Daddy is home early!"

Hunter walked over and picked up his son.

"Yes, of course, we are both coming." I was working on packing for the two of us today. Are we still leaving this weekend?"

Hunter nodded as she sat Adam down at the table. Luna gently set each plate of food down, then walked back to get silverware for the three of them.

“This looks so great, babe,” Hunter said happily.

It was nice to have a woman who was so good to both him and his son. He reached over and grabbed her hand as they all started eating together.

“Adam, you have to eat your vegetables first,” Luna said lovingly.

Adam listened intently to her as she spoke and then did what she asked of him. Hunter loved how good she was with Adam. He squeezed her hand even tighter. There was a big part of him that couldn't imagine living without her. He knew that his son had become attached to her as well.

“I am super excited to take you all to this event,” Hunter said happily. “They are putting us in an amazing hotel, and guess what,” he said while looking at Adam.

“What?” he questioned cheerfully.

“They have a pool!” Hunter said with joy. “I know how much you love a pool, Adam.”

Luna smiled as she noticed the lightness that surrounded Hunter these days. Though he faced stress at work and the pressure of keeping the hockey team at the top, he never allowed it to impact his relationship with her or Adam. He had mastered the art of maintaining a healthy work-life balance. If anything, it was Luna who found herself more affected by his work than Hunter ever was.

“Do you think there will be a lot of paparazzi there at the event?” she asked him intently.

“Well, I am sure,” he said seriously. “It is an event for the hockey team. So, yeah, I am sure there will be paparazzi there, but don't worry, babe. We will do what we

always do. We will just dodge them. It has worked for us so far.”

He tightened his grip on her hand, feeling her anxiety as they walked. Luna had confided in him before about how nervous the paparazzi made her. She wasn't accustomed to the constant attention, and the thought of having her photograph splashed across the tabloids was unsettling. So far, they'd been lucky enough to dodge the prying eyes, but he knew it was only a matter of time before their relationship became public knowledge.

He was worried about what the exposure might mean for her job as a nanny. She loved her work, and he knew how important it was to her. But then again, a part of him thought about the future they could build together—one where she wouldn't need to work if their relationship continued to deepen. He hoped that, no matter what, they'd find a way to face it together. Besides Luna, he was worried about how the attention would make his son feel. He didn't want the child's life to be excessively upset.

After dinner, Luna put Adam to bed and went into Hunter's bedroom. She had been staying over at his place since they became officially committed to one another. She did not remember the last time she was in her apartment. Her belongings were scattered all over his bedroom. She started putting her things away neatly when Hunter walked into the room.

“You know,” he started to say to her with a smile. “You know, you could end the lease on your apartment and fully move in here.”

The thought made her smile. She liked the idea of living with him; it would make their relationship feel more official, taking their connection to the next level. But they'd only been together a few months—was it too soon to move in? What if things didn't work out? Where would she go? She turned to face Hunter, her mind swirling with possibilities.

“You know I love you,” she said to him sincerely. “But this is still new. We both need to protect ourselves.”

Hunter took her hands into his. He sat on the bed and looked up at her.

“You are safe with me,” he said intently. “When I set my mind to something, I achieve it, and I have set my mind on being with you.”

Luna leaned down and kissed him gently.

“You have me,” she said reassuringly.

Luna walked into the bathroom and started to run a bath. Hunter watched her as she undressed herself. She looked spectacular. She was effortlessly beautiful. Luna took her hair out of her ponytail. Her long hair flew down effortlessly and accented her subtle curves. She dipped her toes in the water to test the bath temperature and then placed her whole body into the water. Hunter walked over to her and sat on the bathroom floor by the tub.

“You are so beautiful,” he said lovingly to her.

She reached across the lip of the bathtub and passionately kissed him. He did make her feel good about herself. He made her feel like a queen.

The past few months had been amazing.

Hunter reached his hands into the bath water and searched for her intimate parts.

“Let me get you dirty before you get clean,” Hunter said to her in a sultry manner.

His fingers found her pussy. Luna moaned as his fingertips touched her. Hunter slid

his fingers inside her. Her hands grasped the lip of the tub as he pleased her. He loved the look of pleasure on her face when he touched her. Hunter continued to please her until she reached her climax.

Luna plaid her head back and looked over at Hunter.

“You always know just how to touch me,” she said while catching her breath.

Hunter leaned over and kissed her forehead.

“Here,” he said gently as he picked up her rag. “Let me wash you.”

Hunter intimately washed Luna. This simple act of affection and tenderness made Luna excited. She wanted Hunter in the bathtub with her. She wanted to feel him inside of her.

“Stop,” she suddenly said to Hunter as he was still washing her.

Her remark caught him off guard. He waited to see what else she had to say to him.

“Get undressed,” she said to him seriously.

A knowing grin spread across Hunter’s face. He did as he was told. Hunter stood up and slowly took off his shirt. His pronounced abs showed themselves to Luna. She stared at him as he reached down and unbuttoned his pants. Hunter slowly took off his pants and revealed his hard dick to her. Luna leaned over the lip of the tub. Her wet body called out to Hunter.

“Come on in,” she said seductively to him. “The water is warm.”

Hunter gave a soft chuckle as he slowly lowered both feet into the tub. Bending

down, he gently eased his body into the warm water. Luna watched his every move with hungry eyes, like a predator ready to pounce. She wanted him, needed him, to make her feel the way only he could.

Once Hunter was settled in the bathtub, Luna got on her knees, positioning herself over him. Slowly, she lowered herself onto his lap, her hand reaching into the water to guide him inside her vagina. As she sank down, Hunter leaned his head back with a deep moan, savoring the way she took control. He loved when she was on top of him, and Luna, fully in tune with his pleasure, began to move, her body rising and falling rhythmically as she fucked him.

Hunter wrapped his hands around her waist and assisted her in moving her body. They both moaned in ecstasy. Luna's breasts moved delicately in front of Hunter's face. He could not help but bury his face in them. He began kissing her chest. Hunter's hands moved away from Luna's waist. He ran his hands through her hair and forced her neck to be exposed to him.

Hunter placed his mouth on the open part of Luna's neck. He began by kissing her neck, and then he moved to bite it. Luna moaned as Hunter became rougher in his lovemaking. She moved her body more intensely while on top of him. Hunter let go of Luna and simply moaned. He could not believe how good she felt.

They continued to make love in the bathtub. Luna could feel herself moving closer to her climax, and she could read the expressions on Hunter's face. He was moving closer to finishing, as well. The water splashed all over the floor, but it didn't matter. The only thing Hunter and Luna cared about is that they were pleasing each other.

When they had both reached their climax, Luna stood up and got out of the bathtub. She took a towel and cleaned up where the water had splashed all over the bathroom floor. She then leaned over the bathtub and ran some fresh hot water. Hunter remained lying in the water.

After a moment, Luna turned the water off, reached into the tub, and grabbed the rag. She looked up at Hunter as she placed fresh soap on the washcloth. She started to wash Hunter.

“Now,” Luna started to say. “Now, it is my turn to wash you.”

Hunter continued to relax in the bathtub as Abigail washed him, just as he had washed her. Somehow, this act was more intimate than sex. He could see why Luna was so turned on by it. There was a tender vulnerability in allowing someone to wash every part of your body. There was an intimate kindness to the action. She was taking care of him in so many ways. He was thankful she was there with him.

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Luna stood in line to board the plane with her ticket to Guatemala in her hand. It had been a long time since she had been back home. She wondered what she was going to find once she arrived. She knew that she would have her sister there to support her, but she wondered how quickly she and her mother would reconcile.

Luna loved her mother deeply, but her mother struggled to understand her desire to live in America, the land of opportunity. Luna's accomplishments in the U.S. would have been impossible in Guatemala. While both women acknowledged this truth, it was harder for her mother to accept. Luna also worried about Hunter. Would leaving for a short time harm their relationship? She already missed him, as well as Adam, more than she could express.

Thankfully, Ella had agreed to cover for Luna when she went home. She knew that Adam was in good hands. Ella was a fantastic nanny and would make sure that all of Adam's needs were met. She also knew that Ella was a good friend, and there was no threat from her. Ella would remain professional with Hunter and knew that Hunter loved her. She did not worry that anything would happen with another woman while she was away. Yet, still, she had a knot in her stomach as she wondered if she was making the right decision. Then, her mind flashed back to the crush of photographers who were there the night of Hunter's team event in the city.

Memories of the man who had rushed up to the car with a camera in her face, the lights flashing before her eyes, the screaming, and the name calling, all of this flooded back to her mind. Luna shook her head, trying to erase the memories. She knew that she was making the right decision, no matter how hard it was to make.

While she was waiting to board the plane, Hunter was at home in his apartment. He

already missed Luna, but he knew that letting her go was the right thing to do. She needed to get away. He remembered the look of terror on her face as the paparazzi surrounded them. She was not used to this life. He only hoped and prayed that time away would make her realize how much she loved him and that letting her go would cause her to return home to him and Adam.

He longed for their family to be together, cherishing the beautiful bond they were creating. Their love was unique, born from exceptional circumstances and genuine care for one another. He wanted a life partner again, and he wanted Adam to have a mother. Counting down the days until Luna returned, he reminded himself it would only be a month, but he couldn't shake the fear that a lot could happen in that time. He tried not to let those worries consume him, especially with a big game coming up in less than three weeks. When Ella finally arrived, he quickly grabbed his gym bag and headed straight to the ice rink.

The flight to Guatemala was not as long as Luna had anticipated. She was thankful for this. When she got off the plane and retrieved her luggage, she was pleased to find her sister waiting for her at the arrivals section of the airport. She ran up to her sister and gave her a big hug. It had been many years since they had seen each other, even though they talked on the phone every few months.

"I can't believe that you are here!" Lisa said joyously to Luna. "It has been so long since you have been home. How are you feeling?"

"I'm not going to lie," Luna replied to her sister. "I'm nervous about seeing mom. It has been a long time."

Lisa nodded. She understood Luna's feelings.

"I know," Lisa said to her sister sincerely. "I know you are nervous, but don't be afraid. You and Mom are blood, and to her, nothing is more important than family."

You are her daughter, and she is your mother. There is no changing that. Come on, let's get you home. Mom is coming over for dinner tonight.”

Luna watched as the airport grew farther and farther away from them as the car drove away. She was really home. She was really back in Guatemala, and although she left the paparazzi behind, she knew that a new challenge awaited her: reconciling with her mother. She looked over and smiled at her sister. She was thankful for Lisa's support. Without her, she would never have been able to escape the drama that she was experiencing in America.

When Lisa and Luna finally arrived at Lisa's house from the airport, Luna placed her belongings in the guest room and pulled out her cell phone to call Hunter. She dialed his number, but it went straight to voicemail. Glancing at her watch, she wondered if the time difference was the issue or if he was busy training for his upcoming game. Either way, she wished she could talk to him.

She texted him to let him know she had arrived safely at her sister's house. Then, she called Ella, who thankfully picked up. Luna informed her that she had made it to Guatemala and asked about Adam. She wanted to know how he was doing and whether he was adjusting to a new routine and the changes.

“Adam was quiet today,” Ella said. “I think it is just all the change. He seemed tired and stayed in bed. I would give it a day or two. I am sure he is fine, and there is no need to worry.”

This caused Luna to grow concerned. Adam was an energetic child. He rarely spent most of the day in bed. She began to worry.

“He stayed in bed most of the day?” she clarified with Ella. “He isn't getting sick, is he?”

“I’m not sure,” Ella stated. “I do not think so, but I will keep an eye on him. Don’t you worry, darling. Just enjoy your time with your family. I am sure you are super happy to get away from all the craziness here. Just enjoy your time there.”

“Well,” Luna started to say. “Well, how is Hunter? I tried calling him, but the phone call went straight to voicemail.”

“Well,” Ella began to reply. “Well, of course, he misses you, darling, but don’t worry. He is busy training for this upcoming game. He came home and went straight to bed. I am sure you will hear from him in the morning. He was utterly exhausted after practice today.”

Luna stated that she understood. Knowing the reason why Hunter did not pick up her phone call made her feel better. She was worried that he was mad at her for leaving. She thanked Ella again for covering her shifts while she was in Guatemala. She called her “a real life saver.” When the two hung up the phone, Luna found herself sitting in the guest room, waiting for what was yet to come.

She looked at the watch on her wrist again. She had approximately two hours until dinner time. She had approximately two hours until she would be face-to-face with her mother again. There was no denying that she missed her mother. Their relationship was complicated, but there was always love there. She tried to figure out how she could explain to her mother that living in America was the best thing for her and that leaving Guatemala did not mean that she was leaving her family. She would never forget where she came from, and she would always have love in her heart for not only her family but for her native country, as well.

Living in America was just something that she had to do. She would have never made as much money if she had not left Guatemala. She also would never have met Hunter. Even though things were difficult between them, right now, there was no denying that she loved Hunter, unlike she had loved anyone else before. She felt protective over

him, just as she felt protective over Adam.

“Are you settling in, okay?” Lisa asked Luna.

Luna nodded. She remained quiet. Being back home was a lot to take in, but she was happy to be there. It was a familiar feeling, like meeting up with an old friend. She didn't realize how much she had missed her home. She had buried herself in work, so she never let the feeling of being homesick overwhelm her.

“So,” Lisa started to say. “So, spill the beans. Why are you really here? I know this is not just about seeing me and Mom. What were you running away from in America?”

Luna sighed and then nodded. She knew she would have to tell her sister what had transpired in America. She knew that she could not keep the drama a secret forever. A sister always knew when something was wrong, and Lisa had a way of pulling information from people. So, Luna began to explain everything.

She told her sister how she met Hunter and how Hunter had saved her from the worst date of her life. She explained to Lisa that she and Hunter had a passionate love affair as soon as they met. Luna told Lisa that she had no idea Hunter would be her employer when she went in for the job interview. The whole thing was a magical coincidence. She explained the ups and downs of the beginning of their relationship and how they had worked hard to communicate and be vulnerable with one another. She explained that being with him was unlike anything she'd ever felt before. She told Lisa that she loved Hunter and that she adored Adam like her own son. Then, she explained the complications of the paparazzi. She told Lisa that she had never experienced such chaos before. She never wanted to be famous, and she only wanted to find love.

Lisa sat and listened as Luna spoke. She was a good listener, and Luna was thankful for that. She had been dying to explain this to someone. She knew Hunter understood

somewhat, but then again, he was used to fame. She needed to explain the situation to someone else who had lived an ordinary life and someone who would understand the complications of chaos and fame in a relationship.

Once Luna finished explaining everything to her sister, she sat back and waited for Lisa's response, surprised by what she had to say.

"I can imagine that's a lot to adjust to," Lisa began. "But you had to know who he was from the beginning, and you chose to stay with him."

Luna nodded, realizing that as much as she didn't want to admit it, she had to take accountability for her own actions. No one had forced her to be with Hunter; she was with him because she loved him. It wasn't fair for her to act this way. Sure, there was an adjustment period that came with any drastic lifestyle change. Still, in the end, Hunter and Adam were more important than anything else. She could adjust to fame for their sake.

Just as Luna was about to respond in agreement to her sister, they heard the doorbell ring. Their mother had finally arrived for dinner. Luna took a deep breath. Lisa reached over and grabbed her sister's hand.

"Are you ready?" Lisa asked her sister. "You can do this. Let's go greet her together."

Both of them got up and walked towards the front door. Tears quickly filled her eyes when the door opened, and Luna saw her mother. She had not seen her mother in so long, and so much had changed during that time. She quickly saw that her mother had aged, and although thankfully she was still in good health, her age was representative of how much time had passed between.

As the tears filled her eyes, she worried that her mother would not reciprocate her

feelings. She hoped that her mother was just as happy to see her, and to her great surprise, she was. No words were spoken between them, but Luna's mother quickly approached her and wrapped her arms around her. It felt so nice to be embraced by her mother. At that moment, it felt like the past had been swept away. Lisa smiled as she watched her sister and mother unite with one another.

"I am so happy to see you," her mother finally said. "Let's not go so long without talking to one another again."

Luna smiled and was filled with such overwhelming joy. She leaned back in and embraced her mother again.

"I agree," she said to her mother. "I agree, Mom. I love you. Come on, let's go eat dinner."

The family dinner went better than expected. In fact, it superseded expectations. Luna's mother was interested in hearing about her life in America. She was supportive of her decisions in life, and when she heard that her daughter was dating a famous hockey player, she was taken by surprise.

"Do you love him?" her mother asked her.

"I do, Mamma," Luna responded to her. "I really do love him, more than I have ever loved anyone."

"And his son?" her mother questioned. "Do you think you can love his son as your own? You must think of the child, too, dear."

Luna nodded in agreement. She understood perfectly what her mother was saying to her.

“I do, Mom,” she replied. “I already love him like he is my own son. I am so protective of both of them. I really do think that this is the family I have always wanted to create.”

“Well,” her mother finally said to Luna. “Well, then you have to make it work.”

Meanwhile, back in the United States, Hunter was training hard for the upcoming game. Although he felt distracted without Luna by his side, he knew he needed to stay focused. After finishing his training for the day, he returned home and expressed his gratitude to Ella for staying with Adam.

“How was he?” Hunter asked Ella once he got home.

“He was fine,” Ella responded. “He was fine, but I can tell he isn’t feeling well. He stayed in bed most of the day. If he isn’t feeling better tomorrow, then perhaps we should take him to the doctor.”

Hunter agreed. He hoped that Luna’s being gone had nothing to do with Adam not feeling well, but it was unlike him to be in bed all day. He began to worry, but then he thought it was best not to assume the worst. He figured that it was better to stay positive.

“I will keep an eye on him tonight,” Hunter told Ella. “Thank you again for being here and for covering for Luna.”

Hunter opened up to Ella about his worries. He shared his fears that a life of fame might be overwhelming for Luna. He hoped she wouldn’t just return from Guatemala but that she would come back to him, and their relationship would improve. He confided in Ella that he didn’t want to lose her. She was too important to him.

“You just have to give her time,” Ella replied. “You should have seen how she was

when she first moved to America. She needs time to adjust. It's good that you supported her decision to get away. She'll have the chance to clear her head, and when she comes back, she'll be herself again. Just trust me."

Hunter nodded in understanding. He gave Ella a hug and then went into Adam's room to check on him. He was still sleeping. Hunter hoped that everything was okay.

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The next few days in Guatemala were filled with laughter, fun, and joy. Being back in her homeland brought Luna a deep sense of peace, and reuniting with her mother filled a void she'd been ignoring for so long. It felt good to be surrounded by family again, and although she knew she would eventually have to return to America, knowing she was leaving on good terms made the thought of her departure less daunting.

She had not talked to Hunter in a few days, and although she was worried about him, she figured he was simply busy with training for their big game later that week. It was unusual, as they had not gone this long without speaking, but she tried not to give it too much thought. Luna tried to remain positive, as everything else was going well. She was finally starting to feel like herself again, and she planned to go back to the United States with the mindset that only her relationship with Hunter matter. She would figure out how to deal with the paparazzi.

That day, Luna decided to try to call Hunter again, and when she looked down at her phone, she noticed that she had three missed calls from him. Worried that something was wrong, Luna quickly dialed Hunter's number and waited for him to pick up the phone. He never called that many times in a row. When she heard his voice, she knew that something was wrong. The trembling of his voice was palpable, and her heart began to race.

“Hunter?” Luna said, worried. “Hunter, what is it, darling? Are you okay?”

Hunter stayed silent for a moment. She could tell that he was trying to gather his thoughts. He sounded as if he was holding back tears. She hated that she was not there with him.

“It is Adam,” Hunter said sadly. “Adam is in the hospital. He’s not doing well. They are still trying to figure out what is wrong, but he’s in the hospital, Luna.”

“It will be okay,” Luna said, trying to calm Hunter. “It will be okay, honey. The doctors will figure everything out.”

“I can’t lose him,” Hunter said, trying to hold back tears. “I can’t lose him, Luna. I can’t lose him too. I have already lost so much.”

“You aren’t going to lose anyone else,” Luna said calmly. “I promise you that you aren’t going to lose anyone else.”

After they hung up, Luna quickly began packing her belongings. Hearing the noise, Lisa hurried in and asked what was going on. Luna wasn’t scheduled to leave Guatemala for another week, so watching her pack in such a hurry made Lisa aware that something was wrong.

Luna explained the situation to her sister and tried to remain calm while explaining the details. However, she was scared. She loved Adam like a son and did not want anything bad to happen to him. Yet, she also knew that she had to be strong for Hunter right now. Hunter needed her support; he needed her to remain calm and collected. Freaking out would not solve anything. Luna had to be strong for Hunter, and that was exactly what she was going to do.

Lisa told her sister that she understood and that she supported her decision to leave Guatemala early. Overall, the trip back to her native country was a good one. Luna had reconnected with her mother and felt stronger in her relationship with not only her mother but with her sister as well. However, now she had to go back to the United States and face not only the photographers but Adam's sickness as well. It would be a lot to handle, but Luna was determined to face the issues head-on.

“Be strong for him,” Lisa told her sister. “Remember how much you love him and Adam, and don’t forget to call. We are here for you.”

Lisa helped Luna finish packing her belongings, and they managed to book her a flight back to the United States for later that evening. As Lisa watched her sister go through airport security, she knew Luna had only one thing on her mind: getting back to Hunter.

The flight back to America was long and filled with anxiety. She could not stop worrying about Adam, and she wished that she had been able to be there with him at the hospital from the beginning. He was a healthy child. Where was this illness coming from? She hoped and prayed that nothing serious was wrong with him. She knew that this had to be hard for Hunter. It would be hard for any parent to see their child sick, but Hunter had spent so much time in hospitals already. She was sure that the situation with his wife was in his mind.

Hunter had often told Luna about how much he hated hospitals since his wife died. He had spent countless nights in them, waiting for his wife to wake up, feeling better suddenly. That never happened. He had experienced so much loss in hospitals, and he did not view them as places where people went to get better. He viewed hospitals as places where people went to die. She looked down at her watch. She still had two more hours until the plane landed.

While Luna was still on the plane, Hunter was sitting in the hospital. He was waiting for the doctors to give him an update. He needed her there. She was the only one who could comfort him during this great time of need. He feared his son being sick, and he feared being alone. He felt that his greatest fears were coming true, and there was nothing he could do to stop it from happening.

As Hunter sat there, he fought to keep his mind from going to the darkest places, but fear crept into every corner of his thoughts. He pictured his wife alone and

unconscious in the hospital, unaware of the love that surrounded her. Hunter hoped his son wasn't feeling the same way—he wanted him to know he wasn't alone during this difficult time. Yet, Hunter was helpless, unable to see him while the doctors and nurses performed their urgent tasks. Tests were being run, and all Hunter could do was sit in the waiting room, restless and desperate for any bit of news. He glanced around, the emptiness of the room only amplifying his worry. And one question gnawed at him: where was Luna?

Hunter was confused and distraught. He leaned forward and placed his face in his hands. The stress of the situation was getting to him. He tried not to cry, but he didn't know if he could help it. Hunter hated being vulnerable, let alone crying in public, but this situation caused dire circumstances to be forgiven. Hunter needed someone to rely on. As he was holding back his tears, he heard the footsteps of someone walking towards him.

He looked up and saw scrubs, the typical professional uniform of a doctor, and saw the serious face of a medical professional. He could tell that the news was not good, and he did not want to face this news alone. However, it seemed that he was left with no choice but to shoulder this burden alone, at least until Luna arrived home from Guatemala. He waited for the doctor to speak first, hoping that he had misinterpreted his emotions. Perhaps it was not as serious as he made it out to be. Just as he was talking himself out of feeling distraught, his mind quickly wandered back to seeing Adam sick in a hospital bed.

However, what the doctor had to say was serious indeed. The doctor told Hunter all of the symptoms that Adam was experiencing. Adam had frequent episodes of pain and anemia, which was causing him fatigue, paleness, and weakness. Hunter tried to digest the words that were coming out of the doctor's mouth, but the negative results just kept coming at him. The doctor told Hunter that they had just discovered that Adam had jaundice, which was causing the yellowing of his skin and the whites of his eyes. The above symptoms were the reasons for his son's swollen hands and feet,

as well as his fever, which was the reason Hunter brought his son to the hospital.

“All of these issues,” the doctor began to tell Hunter. “All of these symptoms are symptoms of sickle cell disease. This disease is hereditary and extremely rare. Unfortunately, this means you and your former wife have the gene. Both parents need to be carriers for the disease to present itself.”

Hunter felt a tremendous amount of guilt come over him. He had no idea that he was a carrier of the gene, and he knew that his wife didn't know. He felt responsible for his son's pain and discomfort. He looked around the waiting room and wished that Luna was there. He hoped that she would arrive soon.

“Can I see my son?” Hunter asked. “I had no idea my wife and I were carriers.”

“Not yet,” the doctor said. “We were finally able to break the fever. He is fast asleep now, and he needs to rest. Also, many people do not know that they are carriers. I know you are going to want to beat yourself up over this, but you can't. Now is the time to be strong for Adam.”

The doctor took his hand and placed it on Hunter's shoulder. Hunter thanked the doctor for the update and then returned to his chair in the waiting room to sit down. He was so tired that he did not know what to do with himself. Yet, he knew that he would not be able to fall asleep. The nurse had suggested that he go home to get some rest and return in the morning to see his son, but the thought of leaving Adam alone in the hospital was unbearable. He could not leave him. He was his son, and he needed to be there for him.

Hunter slouched deeply in his chair. He laid his head back. The bright lights of the waiting room were blinding. So, he closed his eyes. His mind started to relax, and he felt himself slowly nodding off. Just as he felt himself slipping away to dreamland, he felt someone place a hand on his knee. He urgently opened his eyes, and when he was

finally able to focus his vision away from the blinding lights, he saw her. He saw Luna. The hospital lights illuminated around her. She was an angel who had finally come to rescue him. Her carry-on bag was by her side. He took it from her and placed it under his chair. He stood up and wrapped his arms around her.

Hunter held her close as Luna leaned up to gently kiss him. Being there with him felt right. Maybe the time away had done her some good after all. Surrounded by family who loved her unconditionally, she had found herself again.

“How is he?” she asked Hunter. “How is Adam?”

Hunter explained everything to Luna. His voice cracked in between words. She could see how much of a toll this situation was taking on him, and she wished she had made it to the hospital sooner. They both sat down in the waiting room, holding hands, as Hunter explained the disease Adam had, how it was hereditary, and the immense guilt Hunter felt for not knowing that both he and his former wife were carriers of the gene causing the disease. At the mention of his guilt, Hunter placed his head in his hand. He started crying. He had been trying to hold back tears all day, and he could no longer do it. Everything came pouring out of him.

Luna continued to hold Hunter’s hand. She thought it was best not to say anything. She wanted Hunter to get his emotions out. She knew him well and knew that this was probably the first time he had really cried since Adam got sick. She leaned over her armchair and kissed Hunter on the forehead.

“You must be exhausted,” she said to him. “I can stay here if you want. Do you want to go home and get some rest?”

Hunter shook his head. He told her that he needed to stay in case anything else happened to Adam.

“You won’t be any good to him if you’re exhausted,” she told him lovingly. “I slept on the plane, so I’m fine. But look at how bright it is in here; you won’t get any rest in the waiting room. Go get a few hours of sleep, darling, and come back in the morning.”

Perhaps Luna was right. Hunter was exhausted and some rest would do him good. The doctor said that they would not be able to see him tonight, anyway. He nodded.

“Thank you,” he said to Luna genuinely. “I am so glad you are back home, baby.”

Hunter slowly got up from his chair and retrieved Luna’s luggage.

“You won’t be needing this, will you?” he asked her with a slight smile. “You aren’t planning on leaving again anytime soon, are you?”

Luna looked at Hunter with love in her eyes. She had never been so sure of their relationship as she was in that moment.

“I am not going anywhere, my love,” she said to him reassuringly.

As Hunter walked out of the waiting room, Luna sank back into her chair and finally let her own anxiety take hold. Adam was truly sick. She hadn’t wanted Hunter to see her worry—she needed to be strong for him. But now, alone in the hospital waiting room, she allowed herself to cry. She was concerned for Adam, and it hurt to see how much his illness weighed on Hunter. Letting her emotions out now would give her the strength to put on a brave face when Hunter returned. At least they would face this together, as a family.

Luna had fallen asleep in the waiting room, and when she woke, it was early the next morning. She rubbed her eyes and scanned the room for a clock, finally spotting one on the wall. It was five a.m. She sighed, realizing she’d managed only about five

hours of sleep in the uncomfortable chair. Eager for an update, she began looking for a doctor. As soon as she spotted one, she flagged him down.

“Excuse me, sir,” she said in a hurry. “Can you give me an update on Adam? He is the young boy in room twelve.”

The doctor looked down at his sheet.

“I just got on shift, ma’am,” he replied politely. “Let me get with a nurse who can give me more information. Just hold tight for a moment, please. I will be right back.”

Luna turned around, as the doctor left and saw Hunter rushing to her.

“Did he say anything?” he asked eagerly. “Did he have an update on Adam?”

Luna shook her head back and forth, then reached down and grabbed his hand.

“Not yet, but they will be back soon,” Luna told him. “He just got on shift. Did you get any rest?”

Hunter told her that he did get some sleep. However, he frequently woke up due to his worries over his son. But he was grateful for the time he got to spend resting in his bed. He thanked Luna for being there for him.

“I need to call Frank,” Hunter said seriously. “I won’t be able to make it to practice today, and depending on how serious this situation is, I might have to quit for the rest of the season. I just hope he won’t be too upset.”

Hunter worried about Frank’s approval. He was like a father to him, and although he had already been there for him through other serious situations, he did not want to let him or his team down, especially with this big mid-season game coming up soon.

Luna saw the look of worry spread across his face.

“Don’t worry about the team,” she told him softly. “This is more important. Besides, Frank took time off to care for his sick father. If anyone understands, it is him.”

As they continued to speak to one another, a nurse approached them. She had a serious look on her face, and Hunter felt like this world was crashing down again. He hoped that nothing bad was happening. The last thing that he heard was that Adam was fine. The fever had finally broken. Everything should be downhill from there, right?

“His fever is back,” the nurse told both of them seriously. “He is conscious. So, you can see him. Follow me.”

Hunter and Luna held hands tightly as the nurse led them back to room twelve. They were both excited to see Adam but afraid of how he would look. Neither of them wanted to see him in pain. Regardless of it all, they knew that they needed to show a united front for him. If Adam saw that they were okay, then perhaps he would feel better, as well. The nurse walked into the hospital room first. When Hunter saw Adam, he immediately went to his side. Luna followed him. Adam looked tired, pale, and weak. He was conscious but barely. His body was sweating, as it was trying to break the fever.

“How high is his fever?” Hunter asked the nurse. “When can he come home?”

“His fever is our main concern right now, especially because it broke once and returned. Once his fever has stayed down for twelve hours, he can go home. A doctor will be in later today to explain how to treat sickle cell disease. The good news is that with proper lifestyle changes, Adam will be able to live a normal life. I will give you all some time alone, together.”

The rest of that day was filled with spending time with Adam. Hunter and Luna tried to lift his spirits, but it was obvious that he did not feel well. Hours passed, and the fever did not break. The doctors had told them that they were worried about potential brain damage due to the severity of Adam's fever. The best thing that they could do was allow Adam to rest.

The doctor recommended that Hunter and Luna go home to get some rest, explaining that Adam would likely be asleep for the rest of the day due to his condition. The medical staff emphasized the importance of not disturbing him. Adam needed uninterrupted rest to recover from the flare-up. Although the thought of leaving Adam pained Hunter, he knew he had responsibilities to fulfill. He needed to update his head coach, Frank, and the rest of the team about the situation. It was crucial for them to understand what was happening, especially since Hunter's absence would affect their preparations. With a heavy heart, he realized that taking care of himself was also a part of supporting Adam.

It did not look like Adam was going to be out of the hospital anytime soon, and once he did get out of the hospital, they would have to make lifestyle changes to accommodate Adam's sickle cell disease. Having this conversation with the team and with Frank was something that Hunter dreaded doing, but he knew it had to be done. He knew how important this next game was to everyone. So far, the team was number one in the National Hockey League, and Hunter was one of their best players, if not the best. Leaving now, mid-season, would hurt the team, but Adam was more important than any of that. He just hoped that everyone understood the severity of the situation.

Luna and Hunter returned to his apartment, exhausted and needing some rest. Ella had kindly agreed to stay with Adam, understanding that Luna and Hunter needed to recharge. She promised to keep them updated if anything significant happened while they were away, and her presence ensured that an adult was there during Adam's medical care. As Luna stepped into the apartment, she felt a wave of safety and relief

wash over her, overwhelmed by a strong sense of belonging.

“I think I am even too tired to take a shower,” Luna said to Hunter. “Are you going to call Frank now or after our nap?”

“After our nap,” Hunter coolly stated.

He was putting that phone call off for as long as possible. Plus, he would be more articulate with his words after more sleep. He knew that he would sleep better now that Luna was back home. They walked to the bedroom together and immediately lay down. It felt good to be side by side once again. Their breath was in unison as each of their eyes closed. Hunter drifted off to sleep, thinking they could conquer anything as long as they were together. He did not know it at the time, but Luna was reaching her slumber, feeling the exact same thing.

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When Hunter woke up from his nap, he reached over and grabbed his phone from the nightstand. He then looked over and saw that Luna was still sound asleep. Not wanting to disturb her, he quietly got up from bed and walked into the living room. The moment that he had been dreading had finally come. It was time to spill the beans to Frank. Hunter dialed his number and not so patiently waited for him to answer.

“Hunter?” Frank said on the phone. “Hunter, are you okay? Practice is about to start in ten minutes. Where are you?”

Hunter told Frank everything; he explained how sick Adam was, how his fever kept coming back, how he was diagnosed with sickle cell disease, and he explained how distraught he was over everything.

“I don’t want to leave the team mid-season,” Hunter pleaded. “I don’t want to quit now, but I don’t know what to do. He is my son, and he needs me, Frank. I hope you understand. I don’t want to let you or the team down.”

He waited for Frank’s reply, and he worried that he would not like what he had to say. Frank remained quiet on the other end of the phone conversation for some time.

“Frank?” Hunter asked him. “Frank, are you still on the phone?”

“I’m here, Hunter,” he responded. “I’m sorry. I guess I am just in shock. You can’t seem to catch a break, can you?”

To his surprise and relief, Frank was highly empathetic to Hunter’s situation. This

made Hunter feel better about the situation. The thought of letting his team down was almost too much to bear, given all the other stress that he was under.

“Don’t worry about the guys,” Frank told Hunter. “I will talk to them. They all want the best for you, even Henry.”

Hunter laughed. He doubted that. He and Henry were always rivals. He seriously doubted that Henry would feel any sympathy about his situation.

“I am serious,” Frank said to Hunter. “Whether or not you two want to admit, you two are like brothers to one another, and yes, I know about the fight. Stella filled me in on everything. Brothers fight, you know?”

Hunter thanked Frank for understanding and for telling his teammates about his break from the rest of the season. Going over and talking to them was the last thing he wanted to do. He wanted to see Adam again. He needed to get back to the hospital. He heard Luna get up and start getting ready for the day.

“Thanks again, Frank,” Hunter said sincerely. “I will keep you updated. Talk soon.”

As soon as he got off the phone, he saw Luna walk into the room. She had just woken up, but she looked so beautiful. He was thankful that she was there with him. He did not want to go through the uncertainty of this situation with anyone else but her.

“Did you get any rest?” Luna asked him calmly. “I could feel you tossing and turning all night long.”

Hunter rubbed his eyes with his fingers. He still looked exhausted. No one could blame him, given the circumstances.

“I kept waking up to check my phone,” Hunter stated. “I kept waiting for the hospital

to call and give us an update.”

“Perhaps,” Luna started to say to him. “Perhaps no news is good news.”

Hunter nodded his head. He hoped that this was the case, but he just didn’t know. He knew that staying positive was imperative, but fear overwhelmed him.

“Let’s get dressed and head back down there,” Hunter stated.

When they finished getting dressed, Hunter and Luna caught a cab back to the hospital. Hunter silently hoped and prayed that when he arrived at the hospital, Adam would be awake, his fever broken, and in good spirits. Luna stared out the window, wondering what she could do to take his pain away. For now, her presence and support would have to be enough. She wanted Hunter and Adam to know that she was there for them as a member of their family, and family was everything.

When they finally walked into the hospital, Hunter was floored at what he saw. The entire team was sitting in the hospital waiting room. Both Hunter and Luna were astonished at the sight of every member of the hockey team. Frank was also there, and when he walked up to Hunter, he could see the emotion on his face.

“I told you,” Frank said to Hunter. “I told you that we were all brothers.”

Frank hugged Hunter, and when they embraced, Hunter started crying. He had never felt so supported. He needed this after feeling guilty for taking a break from the team. He thanked everyone for being there. Hunter grabbed Luna’s hand and turned to Frank.

“Let’s go see Adam,” he said.

Adam loved Frank like he was his own grandfather. The rest of the team stayed in the

waiting room and waited for an update on Adam's condition. The three of them walked into Adam's room to find him awake and happy, lying in bed. The doctor soon followed them.

“His fever finally broke, thank goodness,” the doctor said happily. “We have already started the discharge paperwork. The next few weeks will be critical. He will need to be monitored, but he will be free to go home today. I have asked a nurse to come in and explain everything about his condition and recommended lifestyle changes and what to look for.”

Hunter thanked the doctor and walked over to his son. The father and son embraced. Hunter was so happy that Adam was feeling better and looking more like himself. Frank placed his hand on Hunter's shoulder.

“Take all the time you need away from the team, Hunter,” Frank said sincerely to him. “Family is the most important thing. You can't get this time back.”

Frank walked out of the room to give Hunter, Luna, and Adam some time alone together. Soon afterward, a nurse walked in and explained the seriousness of Adam's disease to both Luna and Adam. She explained the importance of rest, hydration, and exercise. She stated that Adam may likely have a flare-up again, and it would be important to monitor him during this critical time. She stated it would be essential to monitor his pain levels, and rest and activity would have to be implemented accordingly. However, the most important thing was that Adam stayed hydrated, as it was believed that hydration eliminated the cause of flare-ups for sickle cell disease. Hunter thanked the nurse for her information. He was just so happy to bring his son home. Within an hour, Adam was discharged, and Luna and Hunter went back to Hunter's apartment as a family.

That night, after Adam was in bed, Hunter poured two glasses of wine. He handed a glass of red to Luna and then spoke as she leaned in to listen. “I think we both

deserve this,” he said with a laugh. “How are you feeling about everything? Did some time away help? I have to say, Adam and I are both really glad you’re back.”

“I do feel better,” Luna said. “It was nice to be home and reunite with family, but most importantly, my time away made me realize something important.”

“Oh?” Hunter said with curiosity. “What did your time away make you realize?”

“That I don’t want to live without you,” Luna said to him.

She leaned over and kissed him. The two sat on the couch together, drinking wine. Hunter realized that he, too, did not want to live without Luna, and he was going to make sure the two of them were together forever.

Source Creation Date: July 23, 2025, 10:19 am

The next few months were filled with major changes in Adam, Luna, and Hunter's routine. Hunter, who was used to training almost every single day for hockey, had been staying at home and attending to his business ventures from the comfort of his apartment. Luna had continued to look after Adam. She had tried to learn as much as she could about sickle cell disease. Adam was getting used to a new diet. He was also learning to listen to his body to ensure no other flare-ups occurred. It was a lot for a small boy to get used to, at his age. Yet, he seemed to be handling everything with great maturity. In fact, everyone was settling into their own routine quite nicely. Hunter enjoyed working from home, and this was the most time he had spent with his son in years. He was truly thankful for the time off.

Hunter and Luna were still going steadily forward in their romance, even with the changes in routine, and on the nights that she and Hunter wanted to go out as a couple, her friend covered for her and watched Adam. Adam was doing well overall. He still had frequent episodes of fatigue, but his pain was managed. The bond between Luna and Hunter had grown stronger. They had seemed to find their rhythm with one another. It seemed that Adam's illness and Luna's trip back to her native country, Guatemala, had helped them. They were now truly settling in together as a blended family.

There were times when Hunter still struggled with being away from his team. Thankfully, his absence did not affect the team too much, as they were still number one in the National Hockey League. Hunter was thankful to his teammates for supporting him and caring for his son. He had even been invited to an end-of-season party for the team. Yet, part of him felt guilty for attending, knowing that he had only been there for part of the season. However, Luna assured him that it was important that he go. Hunter did not know it, but he would be given an award that night at the

party. The team had a surprise waiting for him; they wanted to give him something special, considering how hard of a year he had experienced with Adam's illness.

"Are you sure that I should go tonight?" Hunter asked Luna. "I was only there for half of the season. Plus, who will watch Adam?"

"I have already talked to Ella," she responded to him. "Plus, it is important to still go out. You have been working in your office for months. Adam is in good hands. I promise you."

Hunter walked into his closet and started going through his suits. Luna walked in and started looking for a dress to wear. She had practically moved in entirely over the last few months. She considered talking to Hunter about ending the lease on her apartment, but the thought of bringing this up in conversation made her uneasy. She figured he had enough on his mind already. For now, this was enough, and the two of them were content.

"What about this one?" Hunter asked her while holding up a grey suit.

"You wore that one last week," she responded to him. "You wore it for the charity function. Here, how about this one, with this tie?"

Luna held up a classic black suit with a bold red tie.

"I can wear a red dress to match your outfit," Luna said happily.

"Well," Hunter started to say to her. "Well, you know how I feel about you in red."

Luna nodded, biting her lip. It had been a while since they'd been intimate. The chaos around them had brought them closer emotionally, but their physical connection had taken a back seat. Luna had been craving Hunter for some time now, and he felt the

same way. Just imagining her in a long, sultry red dress sent a thrill through him.

Hunter looked down at his watch and then back up at Luna. She was biting her lip, and he became even hungrier for her. He wanted her right there, in the walk-in closet.

“You know,” he said to her. “You know we still have some time before Ella shows up to watch Adam.”

“Oh?” Luna responded coyly. “Whatever did you have in mind?”

Hunter walked over to her and ran his fingers through her hair. He then brushed her hair away from her neck. He leaned down and began kissing the nape of her neck. Luna moaned. She grabbed Hunter’s hair and then forced his mouth onto hers. They had not touched one another in so long. They were so hungry for each other’s bodies.

Hunter picked her up, and Luna wrapped her legs around him. The two continued to kiss passionately. Hunter placed her on the carpet of the walk-in closet. He quickly unbuttoned his shirt while Luna unzipped his pants. She pulled his dick out and began moving her hand up and down while grasping him. Hunter moaned. He was so hard.

While she touched him, Hunter placed his hand up Luna’s skirt. He moved her panties out of the way with his hand before placing his fingers inside her vagina. Luna arched her head back. He could see the look of pleasure on her face. He knew just how to touch her, and she knew how to excite him, making him want more from her.

They continued to touch each other, and each time their skin touched, intense pleasure rippled throughout their entire bodies. Hunter reached down, grabbed his penis, and slowly inserted himself inside of her pussy.

“I want you so badly,” Hunter said to her.

Luna widened her legs for Hunter.

“I want you too, baby,” she said sultrily to him.

Luna took one of her hands and placed it between her teeth. She was trying to keep herself quiet in case Ella came into the apartment earlier than expected. Hunter continued to move his body back and forth on top of Luna, matching his movements with the subtle moans she made. His body began moving faster and faster. He couldn't control himself. He wanted all of her. He wanted to be as deep inside Luna as his body would allow. Luna reciprocated his sentiments. She arched her back and wrapped her legs tighter around Hunter's waist. She could feel the sweet release coming. She had been waiting for what felt like forever to feel ecstasy again.

“That's it, baby,” Hunter whispered in Luna's ear. “That's it, baby. I want you to cum for me.”

“Tell me again,” Luna whimpered to Hunter.

“Give me everything,” Hunter said gently to her.

As Hunter moved his body, Luna let herself find a sweet release. Hunter, seeing how much he had pleased her, found his own release, as well. They finished their intimacy together in complete ecstasy. When they were done, they both lay on the floor, exhausted. Luna rolled over onto her side and looked at Hunter.

“That was amazing,” she said to him.

“It really was,” he responded. “And just think, the night is still young.”

Luna got up and went into the bathroom to wash off. The couple began getting ready for their big night out. Soon after they were dressed and ready to go, Ella walked into

the apartment. Luna greeted her and thanked her for watching Adam.

“Oh, you know I love that boy,” Ella told Luna. “You two go out and enjoy yourselves tonight. You both deserve a break.”

A limo was outside the apartment, waiting for both Luna and Hunter. The both of them looked stunning together, Luna in an elegant long dress and Hunter in a classic suit with a red tie. They looked like a picture-perfect couple.

Luna knew that there would be paparazzi at this event, and she had already prepared herself for this fact. She did not know what it was. Perhaps it was Adam's illness or her time away from Hunter, but the thought of so many photographers did not upset her anymore. All she cared about was the family unit that she was building with Hunter. She did not want something as trivial as paparazzi to get in the way of her relationship with him.

She had kept quiet during most of the ride there, not because she was upset but because she knew that Hunter was going to be receiving an award at the ceremony. She was so excited for him, and it was all that she could do to not say anything. She knew this event would cheer him even more, and she wanted to see Hunter as happy as possible. The team had made her promise to keep the award secret, especially Frank, and she did not want to let on that she knew anything about the night's events.

When the driver finally pulled up to the location for the event, Luna peeked out of the passenger's window and saw the paparazzi lined up outside. She took a deep breath and prepared herself; she was ready for this. She could handle the photographers. Hunter, sensing her anxiety slowly building, reached over and grabbed her hand. Luna smiled at him with appreciation. She could conquer tonight with Hunter by her side. Tonight was about him, after all. She had made herself a promise that she would be there for Hunter, and she was going to keep the promise that she made to not only herself but to Hunter and to Adam, as well.

The couple stepped out of the limo together. The flashing lights were blinding, but Luna only focused on Hunter. He guided her across the red carpet. They occasionally stopped and took pictures together for the photographers. Luna sighed to herself again. Only this time, she sighed out of relief. Part of this was actually fun. Could it be that she was starting to enjoy fame a little bit? Not that she was letting the fame get to her head, but if the paparazzi were going to be there, she might as well strike a pose, especially if she was standing next to Hunter. She was happy to have her picture taken with him. She felt like the luckiest girl in the world.

“You are doing great, baby,” Hunter softly said to her. “Just stay focused on me.”

“I am always focused on you,” Luna said lovingly to Hunter.

The two held hands even tighter. When they had finished walking the red carpet, the couple entered the building and saw a stunning array of decorations. The team spared no expense to celebrate the end of the season. The room was filled with dinner tables, set with elegant dishware. The event was fit for hockey royalty. Luna and Hunter walked over to their table, and as they sat down, a waiter swiftly appeared, serving up bubbly champagne, setting the stage for a night to remember.

“Champagne!” Luna exclaimed. “We really are celebrating tonight.”

“The team had a great season,” Hunter said to her. “I really am glad that we are here.

“Thank you so much for convincing me to come tonight.”

“I knew you would regret it if you didn’t come,” she responded honestly. “Plus, I always love an excuse to see you in a suit. You look so handsome you devil you.”

“You look even better,” Hunter said lovingly to her.

The couple spent the next few minutes mingling with others at the party. Everyone

there was in good spirits. The team was number one nationally, and there was much to celebrate that night. Everyone was drinking good wine and liquor, eating tasty food, and enjoying each other's company. Once the appetizers were done circulating the rounds of people, servers began plating the main course. While eating dinner, notable speakers went up on stage and gave inspirational speeches about the team's ability to overcome obstacles throughout the season. It was true that the team had gone through and overcome a lot. Frank, their head coach, was gone for the first half of the season, and Hunter was gone for the second half. Yet, the team did what they did best: they went out on the ice and played hockey.

Hunter started cutting his steak. He had started to eat his dinner when Henry came up and sat down beside him. Luna noticed Henry's presence as well. Her body stiffened. She did not want there to be any trouble tonight. This event was about celebrating the team and Hunter. Really, this event was about celebrating Adam's recovery. The couple had not been out to an event like this in a long time, and Luna felt that it was important for Hunter to enjoy himself and feel a part of the team again. She knew that he missed the camaraderie. She looked over at Henry and tried to make eye contact. She hoped that Henry would behave himself tonight. Hunter and Henry had already been in one fight, and she did not want another argument to break out at this beautiful event. This last thought caused her to look around at the people. She did not see Stella, and that, too, was a good sign. Luna did not want problems from here, either.

"Hey, Hunter," Henry said calmly. "How are you?"

Hunter stiffened. There had been some bad blood between them since they got in a fistfight on the ice several months ago. He had noticed Henry at the hospital several months ago, and he was surprised to see him there. However, Henry did show up for him during his time of need. It meant a lot to him that he was at the hospital when Adam was sick. Hunter loosened his body. He could hear what Henry had to say.

"Hello, Henry," Hunter said coolly. "I am doing well, considering all that has

happened lately. How are you?"

Henry nodded in understanding. Hunter had been through a lot lately, and he did not want to add to that. Henry took a sip of his cocktail. Hunter could tell that he was nervous, and he wondered why. What did he want to say to him? Why was he there?

"I'm pretty good," Henry replied to Hunter. "I don't want to start any trouble, but I was wondering if we could have a word together. Could we talk for a moment, man to man?"

Hunter grabbed his glass of whiskey and cola. He nodded his head yes and got up from his seat.

"I will be right back," Hunter said to Luna, smiling at her.

He did not want her to worry about this interaction. She had been a fortress of strength for him over these last several months. He would control his anger. He did not want her to have to help clean up any other messes. Hunter and Henry walked away from the dinner table and over to the bar, set up for that night's event.

Henry offered to refill Hunter's cocktail. The two men sat silently at the bar for a few minutes. There was an awkward tension in the air.

"I just wanted to call you over and say that I am sorry," Henry finally told Hunter.

Hunter was shocked. He did not expect an apology from Henry. There had always been competition between them, and the thing that always held them together was that they played for the same team. Common pleasantries were not standard between them. So, this apology was surprising to Hunter. He stayed silent for a moment and arched his eyebrows.

“I know,” Henry started to say to him. “I know that we have not always gotten along, but sitting there in the hospital and watching you and Luna worry over Adam, it all changed me. Can we just put this stupid rivalry behind us?”

Hunter reached over the lip of the bar and grabbed his newly filled cocktail and he quickly took a sip. Henry worried that Hunter would not accept his apology. Finally, Hunter began speaking.

“Of course,” Hunter finally said to him. “Of course we can. Thank you for saying that to me, man. Seriously, it has been hell for the last couple of months. Plus, we are on the same team after all.”

The two men shook hands. Luna had been looking over her shoulder to watch the interaction unfold. She smiled to herself. She was happy to see the two men make up with one another. She watched as the two men toasted their drinks together. Hunter walked back over to his table and sat down beside Luna. He reached over and grabbed her hand.

“Don’t worry,” he said, leaning over to her. “All went well.”

Luna reached over and kissed Hunter’s cheek. She was glad tonight was going well, and she could not wait to see Hunter accept his award from the team. The suspense of the surprise was killing her.

More speakers took the stage as Hunter and Luna continued with their dinner. Finally, Frank appeared, and they both turned to watch and listen to him.

“It is no surprise that this season has been filled with many ups and downs,” Frank said, starting his speech. “It is no surprise to any of us in this room that many unforeseen obstacles have occurred for the team as a whole. Yet, through those obstacles, we have persevered and defied expectations. Throughout those obstacles,

we have remained the number-one team in the National Hockey League, and that is a true accomplishment. In order to be a good team, you have to have good leaders, and one of our greatest leaders is sitting in this room.”

Frank continued his speech, and Hunter had no idea who he was talking about.

“When I had my own personal issues to attend to, this young man took control of the team and ensured we saw success in the first half of the hockey season,” Frank stated. “Now, he is experiencing his own troubles, and as a team, we are excited to finally show him some support.”

Hunter suddenly became emotional. He suddenly understood that Frank was talking about him.

“Tonight,” Frank started to say to the audience. “Tonight, in conjunction with celebrating the team’s success this season, we also want to give the most valuable player the MVP award for our team. Hunter, come on up here.”

Hunter rose from his seat and made his way up the steps to the stage, where Frank was waiting with the Most Valuable Player award. As he accepted it, they shared a warm hug. Then, with a smile, Frank gestured for Hunter to step up to the microphone and say a few words to the audience. Hunter took a deep breath, preparing to speak to the crowd.

Hunter stood there, up on stage, silently for a few moments. He was overwhelmed with emotion and gratitude to his team members. He felt so supported. He thanked the team for their support, both throughout the first half of this season when everything was going well and during the second half when his son became gravely ill. He told the audience how much this award meant to him and how he was looking forward to being back as a full-time member of the team as soon as possible when Adam was fully recovered. When he returned to the dinner table after accepting his

new award, he looked over at Luna.

“You knew about this, didn’t you?” he asked her with a smile.

Luna played coy and smiled.

“It was so hard to keep it a secret,” she finally said to him.

The couple kissed. The rest of the night went spectacularly. Everyone enjoyed themselves. The night was a success, and when it was time to leave the event, Hunter and Luna decided they did not want the night to end just yet. It had been a while since they were able to be out like this. They were both thankful that Ella was at home, tending to Adam. Adam was in good hands, and they could enjoy themselves as a couple tonight. They walked towards the front door, and suddenly, Hunter saw a slew of paparazzi waiting for them.

Hunter said to Luna gently. “We can go out the back door if this is still too much for you.”

Luna looked up at Hunter.

“No, I’m fine,” she said calmly. “I can handle it now. Just stay with me.”

Hunter grabbed Luna's hand. He was happy that she was growing accustomed to this new life. Fame could be hard to adapt to, but there was a part of him that liked showing her off. He hoped that she felt the same way about him, and thankfully, she did feel that way as well.

Hunter and Luna walked outside. They walked in front of the photographers, and they posed to have their picture taken a couple more times. The paparazzi seemed to have changed their tone towards Luna. Hunter had been right. Within time, the

photographers would move on to the next salacious story. For the moment, they loved seeing Hunter and Luna together. It was a new and young love. When they finally got in the car, Hunter asked the driver to take him and Luna to a club on 5th Street. Luna remembered this club; it was the same place where they had danced together the night that they had met for the first time.

“Let’s go out dancing again,” he said to her. “Let’s be together, like the first night we met. I do not want the night to end just yet.”

Luna leaned across the seat and kissed Hunter.

“Let’s go dancing,” she agreed with him. “I need to see those moves on the dance floor again.”

Hunter and Luna walked hand in hand into the club, moving past the lines. Being a celebrity did have its perks. The music was loud and boisterous.

Luna could feel the music running through her body. She loved to dance, and she especially loved dancing with Hunter.

“Come here, you,” she said to Hunter sultrily. “Come dance with me.”

The couple danced. Their bodies were so close together that they could feel the sweat dripping onto each other. Hunter pulled Luna close to him.

He loved the feeling of her hips swaying from side to side. He loved seeing how free she was while dancing. All the stress of the past couple of moments has drifted away for now. At that moment, it was just Hunter, Luna, and the music.

When the two of them stepped out of the club, Hunter grabbed his cell phone from the back pocket of his pants. He had several missed calls and texts from Ella. Luna

saw the look of concern grow on Hunter's face.

“What is it?” she asked him earnestly. “What is wrong?”

Hunter showed Luna all of the notifications from Ella. He felt a pit form in his stomach and a lump form in his throat. He knew what all these missed calls and text messages meant. Something was wrong with Adam.

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Hunter, Luna, and Adam sat together in the hospital waiting room, anxiously awaiting an update from the doctor. Adam had suffered a painful flare-up from his sickle cell disease, and at his young age, the pain was unbearable. Ella had rushed him to the hospital on the night of Hunter's hockey team event, but they had missed her call while they were at the club. Now, both Hunter and Luna felt the weight of guilt for not being there when Ella had called. But they were at the hospital now, and that was what mattered.

The doctors were working on managing Adam's pain. Hopefully, he would be out of the hospital within a day or two. He had no fever this time, and that was a good sign. The recommended changes the doctor made during Adam's first hospitalization were taken into great consideration by Hunter and Luna. They changed Adam's lifestyle, diet, levels of activity, everything, and thankfully, that prevented him from getting another fever.

"I hate that we weren't there when he was feeling ill," Hunter sadly said to Luna.

"We can't beat ourselves up over it, darling," Luna reassuringly responded. "We are here now, and that is what matters."

When the doctor finally came out, he explained to them that Adam's pain was being managed well. However, his temperature was slightly rising. Due to Adam's previous history of having an uncontrollable fever, they needed to monitor his temperature further. He would spend the night in the hospital. However, the doctor was hopeful that by tomorrow morning, Hunter and Luna could take Adam home. The doctor explained that, unfortunately, flare-ups like this would occur for the rest of Adam's life. He would continue to live a normal life as long as he followed the doctor's

orders.

“Can we see him?” Luna asked the doctor.

The doctor nodded, and Ella, Luna, and Hunter walked back to Adam’s room. He was lying on the bed watching cartoons. He looked pale and tired, but otherwise, he was in good spirits. That was Adam; he was a bright, happy boy. He embraced both Luna and Hunter as soon as he saw them. They all spent some time together, and Adam asked Luna a question.

“Luna?” Adam said cautiously.

“Yes, my dear,” Luna said softly to Adam.

“Luna, everyone in these cartoons has a mommy and a daddy. Can I call you mommy?”

Luna turned her eyes to Hunter. She looked at him, waiting for his response to Adam's question. She did not know what to say. She was elated that Adam wanted to call her his mother, but she did not want to overstep and make Hunter feel as though she was trying to erase Adam's biological mother from their lives. She could never erase Hunter’s former wife from their lives. She was a part of both Hunter and Adam. She had brought Adam into the world, after all.

Things were going well for Hunter and Luna. Their relationship was growing stronger and more serious, and Luna often thought about spending the rest of her life with him. She hoped that one day Hunter would propose—she had imagined it many times. She loved him deeply, and she knew he felt the same. But she couldn’t help wondering if he would ever consider marriage again. The loss of his first wife had changed him profoundly.

Having Adam accept her as his mother would be a good step in the right direction for all of them. It would be a necessary step to spend the rest of her life with Hunter and build a family together with him. Hunter stayed silent for a moment before speaking. Then he looked over at Luna with love in his eyes. Luna felt relief washing over her body. What could have been an awkward situation was turning into a beautiful moment. He nodded his head up and down.

“Yes, Adam,” “Yes, of course you can call her that.”

Luna smiled to herself. She was so happy that so much joy could be felt during such a difficult time in their lives. Luna walked over to the side of the bed and sat down. She leaned down and hugged Adam.

“I would be honored to be called your mother,” she said lovingly.

Ella, who had been watching all of this unfold, felt joy in her heart, too. She knew that Luna had spent so much time trying to find herself after immigrating to America. It seemed that she was finally finding her way, and as a good friend to Luna, she was thrilled to see her so happy. She watched Hunter, Luna, and Adam embrace each other as one happy family. Her own heart was full.

A doctor came in and asked Adam how he was feeling. Though he was cheerful, he still winced in pain every now and then. Adam said that his pain was a seven on a scale of one to ten. This concerned the doctor, and they all agreed that Adam should stay and be monitored further. Within an hour, Adam was asleep and resting again. Hunter and Luna let him sleep. They thanked Ella for her help and for looking after Hunter. Then, they walked to the hospital cafeteria and got a bite to eat.

“How are you holding up?” Luna asked Hunter seriously. “I know it must be hard to see him like that.”

“It is,” Hunter replied. “Regardless of how hard it is for me, it is even harder for him. He is the one who has to deal with the pain physically. But that was a big moment back there, huh?”

“Him wanting to call me mom?” Luna asked with sincerity. “That meant a lot to me.”

Hunter paused for a moment before speaking again. He had envisioned being with Luna, but marriage was something that was a different story. He had never seen himself getting married again once his wife died, but Luna had come around and changed that. The way she was with Adam and her support of him made all of the difference. He needed to know if she was on the same page as him, though.

“Did you ever see yourself being a mom?” Hunter genuinely asked Luna. “Did you ever see yourself as a wife?”

Luna took a bite of her apple, chewed it, and sat in thought. She could not believe that she was having this conversation in a hospital cafeteria, but she also knew that, given the day’s earlier events, this conversation was inevitable.

“I have,” she said honestly. “I love you, and I want to spend the rest of my life with you. I know that for you, it is different. You had a beautiful marriage to a beautiful woman, and she was taken from you too soon. Hunter, here is the thing, though. No matter how much I love you, I do not want to be in second place. No one can replace your first wife, but I also don’t want to feel that I am in a role I can never fulfill. Do you think you can ever fully move on and be a husband again?”

Hunter sat and thought for a moment. He knew that he loved Luna, but she did bring up some valid points. Part of him still lived in the past. The part of him that had guilt for moving on with someone else ruled a big part of his life. He missed his wife, but he also loved Luna. His heart was torn between two worlds. His heart broke for both the present and the future.

Suddenly, the doctor walked into the cafeteria. He sat down and explained to Hunter and Luna that Adam's pain level had decreased within the last hour. This was the most wonderful news. They were going to be able to take Adam home with them soon.

By that evening, Adam was released from the hospital. Luna and Hunter happily took Adam home to rest. The family continued to adjust to this new way of life. Over the next three months, Adam's health seemed to improve, and he had no flare-ups. The topic of marriage did not come up between them again. However, they still thought about the topic individually but kept their thoughts to themselves.

Luna had come to terms with accepting that her idea of a conventional family may never happen. She had accepted that Hunter may never want to marry again. She believed she could still be happy if their relationship stayed as it was. She still had both Adam and Hunter. That was a family, even if it was not a traditional one.

Hunter, on the other hand, thought about his love for Luna and his former wife. He wondered how much longer he could hold onto the past and whether or not he was hurting his son by not going all in with Luna. He wanted his son to have stability. Was he keeping that from him? Was Hunter keeping his own happiness at bay out of fear and guilt?

After contemplating these topics, Hunter grabbed his coat and walked into the living room, where Luna was on the couch reading. Ella had taken Adam to the park, and it was just the two of them in the apartment.

"I am going to go to the ice rink," Hunter said to Luna. "I will be back soon."

"Is something wrong?" she asked him concerned. "No, I just thought that I would catch up with the team. That's all. I love you, darling. I will be back soon. I promise."

Hunter leaned down and kissed Luna as she lay on the couch. Luna felt that something was off with Hunter, but she decided to let it go. She told him that she would see him soon and to have fun. Then, she went back to reading her book.

Hunter left his apartment and took the elevator down to the lobby. Outside, he flagged down a cab. Once he settled into the back seat, the driver asked where he wanted to go. Hunter took a deep breath.

“Take me to the cemetery on Southeast and Seventh Street, please,” Hunter said to the cab driver.

The driver took off from the curb and traveled to their destination. Very few people would have understood the rationale in Hunter’s mind, but for him, this was important. Hunter needed to go to the cemetery to get closure. Hunter needed to talk to his deceased wife.

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When the cab finally stopped in front of the cemetery, Hunter slowly got out of the car. He leaned into the driver's window and handed the driver a one-hundred-dollar bill.

"Will you stay here until I am finished, please? He asked the driver of the cab. I won't be too long."

The driver of the cab agreed and happily took the money from Hunter. Hunter turned away and slowly walked to where his wife was buried. He had not visited her gravesite in quite a while. It was hard for him to remember her in that way. He wanted his memories of her to be about a life filled with happiness, not death and mourning. When he found his wife's grave, he stood in silence. He could feel himself getting emotional, and he tried desperately to push those emotions to the side. After spending a few minutes standing there quietly, he decided to say a few words. He had no idea if his former wife could hear him, but the thought of talking to her seemed cathartic.

"It's me," he said softly. "I know I haven't been here in a while. I want you to know that Adam is good. He has had some difficulties, but overall, he is a happy kid, and that is all that matters."

Hunter looked down at the ground. What he really came there to say was difficult for him to articulate, and somehow, saying it at the graveyard made it all feel so final. His eyes dodged back to his wife's grave.

"I met someone," he said to his former wife. "I met someone really special, and I actually think that you would like her if you were still here. I want you to know that I

loved you so much.”

Tears swelled in Hunter’s eyes. He felt his legs get heavier. Hunter brought himself to the ground, at eye-level with his wife’s grave.

“I loved you so much, my darling,” he said to the gravestone. “I want you to know that no one can replace you, but I am going to move on. I want to find love and happiness again, and I hope that you don’t resent me for that. I am so thankful for the time we had together, but I have to leave you in the past.”

Hunter paused, thinking about what he wanted to say. He wanted his late wife to know that Luna was good to him and Adam. When he thought about it, he felt certain she would have loved Luna. In another world, they might have even been friends. Life just had different plans for all of them. “I put off coming here,” he admitted. “I did because I met someone — someone I think I’m falling in love with. Her name is Luna, and I believe she loves me too. She not only loves me, but she also loves Adam. I just want you to know there’s no need to worry about us. She’ll take care of us. Maybe someday, I can bring her here with Adam, and you’ll see how happy we are together.”

Hunter got up from the ground and wiped the tears away from his face. He slowly made his way back to the cab. The driver had been waiting for him and was standing outside the cab, leaning against the vehicle. The driver was smoking a cigarette. He watched as Hunter walked towards him, and he could see that he was upset. He did not say a word to him. He simply offered Hunter a cigarette. Hunter happily accepted the offer. He figured that a nicotine high would help ease and level off his emotions. The cab driver gave Hunter his lighter. The two men stood outside and smoked a cigarette as they gazed off onto the graveyard.

“Got a loved one up there?” the driver asked Hunter, nodding toward the graveyard on the hill.

“My wife,” Hunter replied solemnly. “She’s buried up there.”

“Oh,” the driver said softly. “I’m sorry, man. It’s really rough. Moving on from a love like that is hard. But if you ever get a second chance, you don’t want to miss it.”

Hunter glanced over, curious. It wasn’t often he met other widowers close to his age. He wondered if the driver had been through something similar.

“Did you lose your wife too?” Hunter asked.

“No,” the driver said bluntly. “No, not my wife.”

Hunter looked down, disappointment washing over him. He’d hoped for some advice from someone who’d shared his experience. But then, after a pause, the driver continued.

“I lost my fiancée,” he said, meeting Hunter’s eyes with a hint of vulnerability. “A week before our wedding. She never got to be my wife, but I loved her like one. That’s for sure.”

Hunter’s heart sank. At least he’d had time with his wife—they’d married, had a child, and shared memories. “That must have been tough,” he said softly. “I can’t imagine how hard that was for you.”

The driver nodded, his expression shifting to one of reflection. “Yeah, it was. I thought I had forever, you know? We had our whole lives planned out. And then, just like that...” He trailed off, his voice heavy with the weight of loss.

Hunter could relate. “It’s like you feel this emptiness, right? Like a part of you is missing.”

“Exactly,” the driver replied, his eyes focused on the road ahead. “But here’s the thing: at least we found love, even if it was for a short time. Some people never get that chance.”

Hunter considered this. “That’s true. Love is a privilege, isn’t it? Not everyone gets to experience it.”

The driver took a drag from his cigarette, exhaling slowly. “If you find it again, man, hold onto it. Don’t let fear stop you. Life’s too short for that. You never know what could happen.”

Hunter took a deep breath, nodding in agreement. “You’re right. There are no guarantees that love will stay, but to let it slip away—that feels like the real loss.”

The driver glanced at him, a small smile forming. “Exactly. You gotta be brave, my friend. It’s what your wife would want for you, too.”

“Yeah,” Hunter replied, feeling a sense of hope he hadn’t anticipated. “She always wanted me to be happy.”

“Then go after that happiness,” the driver said, turning his gaze back to the road. “Life’s too precious to waste.”

After each of them had finished their cigarette, both men got back into the vehicle. As soon as the driver pulled away, Hunter looked back at the entrance to the cemetery one more time. He silently said goodbye to his former wife. Then, he reached into his pants pocket and pulled out his cell phone. He dialed Frank’s number, and he felt relief when Frank answered his call.

“Hey, Frank,” Hunter started to say over the phone. “Hey Frank, I am sorry to bother you, but I was wondering if you had some time to meet up.”

Frank agreed to make some time to see Hunter. They were close friends, after all, and it was not often that Hunter flat-out asked Frank to see him. Something was up.

“Yeah,” Frank replied to Hunter. “Yeah, I can make some time to meet up early next week. Everything okay? Adam isn’t sick again, is he?”

“No, no,” Hunter reassured Frank. “No, Adam is fine. He has been doing much better actually the last couple of months. I was actually asking to meet up with you to talk about Luna.”

Frank grew concerned, and his concern turned to silence. Hunter picked up on this and eased Frank’s mind. There was no cause for concern or worry.

“I am thinking of proposing to her,” Hunter finally told Frank. “I am going to propose to Luna, and I would like your help planning it if you have the time. It would mean a lot to me.”

Frank sighed in relief. He was happy to hear that this meeting was about something positive. I felt that Hunter needed something positive in his life after all that he had been through.

“Thank goodness,” Frank sighed. “You had me worried that something was wrong between the two of you. That would be a shame because you two really are great together. I have not seen you this happy in a long time, Hunter. I would be happy to help you out.”

Hunter thanked Frank. When the two of them got off the phone, he saw that he had two missed text messages from Luna. She had been wondering where he was. It was true that she thought he was at the ice rink. He felt bad for lying to her, but he needed to keep this to himself. The closure he had found by closing the past chapters of his life allowed him to look forward to the future. It allowed him to look into a future

with Luna. If push came to shove, surely, she would be able to understand that, but for now, he needed to keep his visit to the cemetery to himself. It somehow felt more genuine that way.

When Hunter arrived back at his apartment, he handed the driver another one-hundred-dollar bill.

“For your discretion,” Hunter said to the cab driver.

The cab driver nodded in agreement and happily took the money from Hunter. The last thing that Hunter needed was a story in the newspaper about him visiting his dead wife’s grave. That would cause chaos in his relationship, which would not be good for either him or Luna. Hunter closed the cab door behind him and walked back up to his apartment. He was happy to see Luna.

She had not left the couch. She was still reading her book when she noticed Hunter walk into the living room. He sat down beside her on the couch.

“Did you enjoy your visit?” she asked him.

He nodded and then gently took the book from her hands. He placed the book on the floor and leaned over top of her on the couch.

“I did,” Hunter said. “I did, but I am glad to be back. Adam and Ella shouldn’t be back for another hour. We still have some time together.”

“What did you have in mind?” she asked him seductively. “Whatever did you want to do with our spare time together?”

Hunter started to take Luna’s pants off her. He threw her jeans and underwear off to the side. His head moved downward. Luna began moaning before his mouth even

touched her. She loved how he made her feel, and the previous memories of his mouth all over her vagina made her moan. Hunter used the magic of his tongue to please her. When he began to use his fingers in conjunction with his mouth, Luna began moaning his name.

“Hunter,” she moaned to him. “Hunter, yes, just like that.”

She ran her fingers through his hair as his head remained near her lady parts. Nothing had ever felt as good as when they were sexually intimate with one another. She pulled his head away from her pussy and to her lips.

“Here,” she said to him softly. “Come here and let me taste myself off of you.”

Hunter smiled sultrily. He loved it when she talked dirty to him. He loved it when she allowed herself to be sexually free with only him. Her hands reached down to his penis. He was hard and ready for the taking. She guided him into her warm, waiting body, watching as his mouth parted in a gasp as she enveloped him completely. Their bodies moved together in perfect rhythm, back and forth, as if they were made for each other.

“Faster,” Luna whispered in Hunter’s ear. “Faster, Hunter. Harder, Hunter.”

Hunter did as she said. His only goal was to please her. Pleasing her made him feel as if he was on top of the world. Seeing the look of ecstasy on her face is what got him off. Luna’s face turned to pure pleasure. Her mouth opened, and her eyes rolled back. Hunter could tell she was getting close to climaxing. He continued to move inside her, faster and harder, just as she had told him to. Her moans became louder. Hunter, who could no longer hold back, lost control. He pounded himself inside of her, pleasing both her and him at the same time. His mouth let out a moan. He closed his eyes. They were both reaching their orgasm at the same time.

When they were both finished climaxing, they both lay on the couch. Luna looked at the watch on her wrist.

“Ella will be here with Adam any minute,” she said to him. “I promised to take her out to dinner as a thank you for all her help here with Adam. We better clean up, baby.”

They both got up and walked to the bedroom. Hunter walked into their private bathroom and wet a washcloth. He walked back over to Luna, who was lying down on the bed.

“Let me wash you off,” he said to her.

Luna spread her legs on the bed while Hunter cleaned her up. There was something about this action that was more intimate than the sex they had just had together. Hunter wanted to take care of Luna in whatever way was necessary or otherwise. Luna watched as he went back into the bathroom and washed himself off. He looked so good, and she wondered how she could have gotten so lucky by being with him. She hoped that she would be with him forever.

Luna got up off the bed and dressed for Ella and Adam’s arrival. She was wearing a cute black skirt with a pink top. She decided to wear flats instead of heels. Her outfit was simple but cute, and when Hunter saw her, he was turned on all over again.

“We may have to go for round two, darling,” he said to her seductively.

Just then, they both heard the front door open. Ella had returned with Adam. Hunter quickly put on a pair of shorts and a T-shirt. Luna started to walk out of the bedroom when she turned back to him.

“Don’t lose that thought,” she said coyly to him. “I will be back before you know it.

Will you be okay with Adam while I am gone?"

Hunter shook his head yes.

"Yes, darling," he said happily to her. "We will be fine. Don't worry about us. We will be fine. I want you two to have fun tonight. Enjoy your dinner with Ella. I love you."

Luna walked over to Hunter and gently kissed him on the lips. How did she get so lucky? She smiled at him as she walked into the kitchen to greet Ella and Adam. Ella explained that Adam had a great day playing at the park. He was in good spirits. Luna was happy to see him healthy and happy. He had been through so much as a small child.

"You are going to hang out with Daddy while I take Ella out to dinner," Luna said softly to Adam.

"Okay," Adam said cheerfully. "Okay, Mommy. I love you."

Luna smiled genuinely at Adam and leaned down to his height. She was still adjusting to him calling her "Mom," and this was the first time he had told her that he loved her. Luna's heart swelled with joy, almost bringing her to tears. Meanwhile, Hunter stood in the hallway, overhearing their conversation. Hearing Adam express his love for Luna filled him with happiness, affirming that he was on the right path. Hunter felt certain he was meant to marry Luna, and Adam's affection for her only reinforced that belief.

"I love you too, Adam," Luna said to Adam.

She kissed him on the forehead and grabbed her purse off the counter. She walked out of the front door with Ella. They both took the elevator downstairs. Ella hailed a cab.

When they both got into the vehicle, Ella began to talk.

“How did that feel?” Ella asked Luna. “How did that feel to have Adam tell you he loved you as his mom? That was a pretty big deal, I think.”

Luna shook her head yes. She explained that she felt so connected to the family unit she was creating and being accepted into by being with Hunter.

“Do you think he would ever marry again?” Ella questioned Luna. “I know you want to be married. Do you think he would ever pop the question again after losing his wife so suddenly?”

Luna shrugged her shoulders. She felt slightly embarrassed, and she did not understand why. Ella was her best friend. She should be able to tell her anything. Maybe she felt embarrassed because there was a part of her that believed Hunter would never ask her to marry him. She had accepted that possibility, but that didn't mean that she wasn't hoping for a proposal from him.

“I really don't know,” she said honestly to Ella. “I love him with all my heart. All I know is that I want to be with only him, whether we are married or not.”

While Luna and Ella were in a cab, traversing the city, Hunter was in his office looking at engagement rings. He scrolled multiple websites, looking for the perfect ring for Luna. He wanted her to feel like a princess when he proposed to her. He knew that Frank would have some incredible ideas for proposing to her, but he also wanted to ensure that the ring he used to propose to her was fit for a princess. Luna deserved that. She had put up with so much in such a short amount of time. Hunter believed that any other woman would have run away, not her, not Luna. She stayed. She stayed because she genuinely loved him. She did not care about the fame or the money. She wanted Hunter, and she wanted Adam. She wanted a family. All of that made Hunter love her even more.

He continued scrolling through various engagement rings, excitement bubbling up inside him. He was going to propose to Luna, and she had no idea that her life was about to change forever. She had no inkling that she was soon to become the wife of a famous professional hockey player.

When Ella and Luna arrived at the restaurant and were finally seated, Ella jumped right into questioning Luna about her relationship with Hunter again. Luna didn't mind; she knew Ella was coming from a good place—after all, she was her best friend. The two girls ordered cocktails and sipped their drinks during their lively conversation.

“I'm just saying,” Ella lovingly said to Luna. “I'm just saying, especially since you and your family are close again, if you want to spend the rest of your life with Hunter, you should introduce them to him!”

Luna shook her head, unsure how Hunter would react to her family. She had grown up differently than he did, with a modest upbringing outside the United States. From what she knew, Hunter had always been surrounded by wealth. His father was a successful businessman, and Hunter had inherited a fortune, along with his earnings from a successful hockey career. He seemed to have it all.

“Don't go there,” Ella said seriously, sensing Luna's doubts. “Hunter loves you, and he doesn't care how you were raised. He's genuinely interested in your background, but he's not judgmental. Trust me, we've dealt with plenty of those kinds of people, and Hunter is not one of them.”

Luna took another sip of her cocktail, realizing Ella was right. She hated feeling vulnerable, which made her feel like a hypocrite for urging Hunter to open up while holding back herself.

“I don't know if we can travel to Guatemala right now,” Luna said seriously, glancing

at Ella. “With Adam, we’re trying to avoid adding any unnecessary stress. Traveling sounds fun, but it might be too much for him at this point. We don’t want to risk triggering another flare-up.”

Ella nodded, reassuring Luna with a wave of her hand to indicate not to worry. After finishing her drink, she signaled for another one before speaking again. Luna didn’t mind; Ella deserved a night to unwind after all the care she had provided for Adam.

“No, no, darling,” Ella said to Luna. “I don’t think that you should travel there. They should travel here, to America!”

“My mom would never come over here,” Luna replied bluntly. “There is no way.”

“There is always a way,” Ella said before taking another drink. “Hunter would pay for it all, darling. He would be happy to do it.”

“I don’t know, Ella,” Luna said, unsure. “That is a lot to ask. Let’s just talk about it another time. Our food is about to arrive.”

The ladies ate their food, and when they returned to the apartment, Luna insisted that Ella stay the night in the guest room. She didn’t want her to attempt to go home in such a condition.

“It is no bother at all, Ella,” she kindly said to her. “I will go and place an extra blanket in the guest room. It can get cold in there at night, sometimes.”

When Luna walked away, Ella noticed Hunter walking out of his office. She smiled at him.

“How was dinner?” Hunter asked Ella kindly. “Did you girls have fun together?”

Ella said yes and told Hunter how delicious everything was. She looked off to the side. Luna was still in the guest room. She moved over closer to where Hunter was standing.

“I’m just going to throw this idea out there, okay?” Ella said quickly, glancing at Hunter with excitement. “Luna won’t admit it, but she wants you to meet her mom and sister, especially now that they’ve patched things up. The only way that’s going to happen, though, is if you fly them out here to America.”

Hunter raised an eyebrow, intrigued by the suggestion. “You think they’d come?”

“Absolutely! It would mean the world to her,” Ella replied, leaning closer. “Luna has been through so much, and having you meet her family could really strengthen your relationship. Plus, it would show her how serious you are about her. It could be a beautiful step forward for all of you.”

Hunter nodded slowly, considering the idea. The thought of bringing Luna’s family to America was daunting but exciting. He wanted to support her and show her how much he cared.

Ella heard the sound of Luna’s footsteps draw closer. She stepped away from Hunter. Luna walked into the room, feeling as if she had just entered into a private conversation.

“The guest room is all set up, Ella,” Luna said to her friend.

When Ella left, Luna turned to Hunter. She quietly asked him what the two of them were talking about before she walked into the room.

“Oh,” Hunter started to say to her. “Oh, it was nothing. She just told me about the restaurant where you two had dinner. She suggested that I take you there sometime.”

Hunter hesitated to share Ella's suggestion with Luna. If he decided to bring her mother and sister to America for a visit, he wanted it to be a complete surprise. The thought of seeing Luna's face light up when she reunited with her family filled him with joy, and he felt that keeping it under wraps for now was the best approach.

He wanted to focus on sorting out the details of the engagement ring and planning his proposal before bringing anything up. The anticipation of that moment thrilled him; he could hardly believe how excited he was. After everything he had been through, he had finally found love again, and this time, it felt different — deeper, more profound.

Hunter envisioned a future with Luna, one where their lives intertwined seamlessly, and he couldn't wait to make it official. Each passing day brought him closer to that dream, and the thought of surprising her only intensified his eagerness.

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A couple of weeks later, Hunter walked into a small coffee shop located down the street from his apartment. Luna was with Adam, and Hunter told her he needed to run some errands. When he entered the coffee shop, he looked to his right and saw Frank sitting in the corner of the room with two cups of coffee. He waved him over to sit down.

Hunter hurried over and sat down across from Frank, gratefully accepting the cup of coffee he handed him. He gulped it down eagerly; it was hot and black, exactly how he liked it—no creamer or sugar nonsense. As he continued to drink, he realized he was going so fast that he nearly burned his mouth. Nervous energy coursed through him. This was a big week for Hunter, and he hoped he wouldn't mess up the execution of his plans.

He was planning to propose to Luna, but first, he had a few surprises lined up for her. To make everything perfect, he needed Frank's approval on all of his ideas. He respected Frank's opinion and trusted that he would keep everything about the proposal under wraps. Just as he was lost in his thoughts, Frank's voice pulled him back to reality.

“Do you have it with you?” Frank asked Hunter with excitement. “I need to see the ring, man!”

Hunter nodded in agreement and reached into his jacket pocket, pulling out a small black box. He opened it slowly, revealing a stunning engagement ring with a big, sparkling diamond. He wanted only the best for Luna and hoped this ring would convey that sentiment.

“It’s beautiful,” Frank exclaimed, his eyes lighting up. “I know she will love it. It’s elegant, just like she is. It’s the perfect ring for her.”

Hunter felt a wave of relief wash over him. Frank’s approval meant a lot, especially since he knew Luna well enough to understand what she would like. After carefully placing the ring back in his jacket pocket, the two men shifted their focus to the arrangements for the proposal.

“So, walk me through what you’re thinking,” Frank said eagerly. “You want to go back to the original bar — the one where you two met, right? The place where you saved her from that horrible date?”

Hunter nodded, feeling nostalgic. He wanted to take her back to where their love story began. There was something romantic about retracing their steps. After enjoying a drink and reminiscing, he planned to take Luna to the team’s ice rink. She had been a significant support for him through the ups and downs of his career over the past few months, and he thought an empty stadium would be the perfect backdrop. He envisioned filling the rink with flowers and white lights, creating a beautifully romantic setting. After their time at the bar, he would take her ice skating, and when the moment felt right, he would drop to one knee and ask Luna the big question. He could only hope that she would say yes.

“Don’t worry,” Frank said to Hunter as if reading his mind. “She is sure to say yes to you, Hunter.”

The two men continued to sit at the table and drink their coffee. Hunter was giddy with excitement, and Frank matched his emotions. Hunter thought it felt nice to have the support of Frank during this monumental time. His own father had passed, and Frank filled that paternal void. While the two men sat in the coffee shop and finished their coffee, Luna was in Hunter’s apartment on the other side of the street.

Luna brewed herself a cup of coffee and began preparing breakfast for Adam. As she fried bacon, gratitude washed over her for Adam's good health lately. However, she couldn't shake the feeling of concern about Hunter's frequent absences. He seemed to be running errands all the time, which made her uneasy. While she trusted him and didn't believe he was involved in anything suspicious, the sense that he was keeping something from her lingered in the back of her mind.

She was still lost in thought when she heard the familiar pitter-patter of Adam's feet as he walked into the room, and a smile spread across her face. She was so grateful to see him feeling better. Luna quickly set a plate of bacon, pancakes, and juice on the table, ready for their breakfast together.

“Syrup!” Adam exclaimed. “Can I have the syrup, please, Mommy?”

Luna smiled. She was still getting used to Adam calling her mom, and each time she heard it, it made her heart melt. She loved him like he was her own son.

“Yes, honey,” Luna said to him. “Here it is.”

Luna set the butter and syrup on the table before taking a seat next to Adam. Just as they were about to dig in, Hunter walked in, a broad smile lighting up his face. His happiness caught Luna off guard; lately, he had been acting a bit different—not in a bad way, but enough to make her feel somewhat left out of the loop. Curiosity tugged at her. What was going on with him?

“You're just in time for breakfast!” she said, trying to match his enthusiasm. “There are plenty of pancakes and bacon for everyone.”

Hunter's heart swelled as he saw Luna and Adam sharing a moment at the kitchen table. It felt so right, like a scene from a perfect family life. He walked over, pulled out a chair, and settled down with a contented sigh. Luna poured him a glass of juice,

her eyes sparkling with warmth.

“So,” Luna began, breaking the comfortable silence, “what errands had you running around so early this morning?”

Hunter took a sip of his juice, relishing the moment. “Oh, just a few things. You know how it is—picking up some supplies for the team and handling some personal matters.”

“Personal matters?” Luna raised an eyebrow, intrigued. “That sounds mysterious. Are you planning a surprise or something?”

Hunter chuckled, the glint in his eyes revealing that there was indeed more to the story. “You could say that. But you know I can't spoil it just yet. I want it to be a surprise.”

“Now you've got me curious!” Luna teased, leaning closer. “Just promise me you're not planning anything too crazy.”

Hunter smiled, appreciating her playful banter. “No crazy plans, I promise. Just a little something special. But enough about me—let's enjoy breakfast first, and then I'll share more.”

Hunter quickly took a bite of his bacon and reached across the table to grab the butter and syrup. He spread butter over his pancakes and then poured syrup all over them. He was trying to buy time to think of an alibi. He did not want to ruin the surprise of the proposal. He also didn't want to lie to her, so he had to think quickly. Luna was staring at him, waiting for an answer. She knew that something was up, and he had to mitigate that situation as quickly as possible.

“I met with Frank,” Hunter said honestly. “I met with Frank to discuss possibly

rejoining the team for the last game.”

Part of what Hunter had said was true, while the other half was something he desperately wished to be true. He longed to join the team for the last game of the season. With Adam in a stable enough place, Hunter felt a surge of excitement at the thought of getting back on the ice; he missed playing hockey more than he had realized.

Luna glanced at him in surprise. This wasn't what she had expected to hear, but it explained his recent joyful mood. She knew how much he missed the game, and this was great news for both of them. Without thinking, she reached over and took Hunter's hand, feeling a wave of support and encouragement pass between them.

“That would be great, honey,” Luna said in support. “What did Frank say about it all?”

Hunter coughed before taking a sip of juice. He looked over at Luna.

“He said he would get back to me,” Hunter said quickly. “But I think that it is a good possibility that I will join the team again.

After breakfast, Hunter knew he had to call Frank. He was determined to turn his little white lie into a reality. Deep down, he felt confident that everything would work out in his favor. He was meant to be with Luna, and he was meant to play in the last game of the hockey season—he could feel it in his bones.

As the family finished their meal, Luna started cleaning up the kitchen. Meanwhile, Hunter slipped into the bedroom to make a quick call to Frank.

“Hey, man,” Hunter said quickly. “Any chance I could play the last game of the season?”

He heard Frank chuckle on the other end of the line. He did not know whether that was a good or a bad sign. Hunter waited patiently for Frank's response.

"I thought you would never ask, Hunter," Frank finally responded to him. "Of course, come to practice early tomorrow morning. Don't be late; you have a lot of catching up to do."

Hunter ended the call with a giant smile on his face. He could not remember the last time that he was this happy. Luna walked into the bedroom and saw that he had just finished a phone call.

"Who was that?" she asked him directly. "You have been very busy this morning."

Hunter sensed a tone in her voice.

"That was Frank," Hunter said to her softly. "He gave me the green light to play the last game. He said to come to practice tomorrow. So, I will have to leave early tomorrow morning."

He walked over to her. He could tell that she was agitated and that he had not paid her enough direct attention lately. Little did she know that he was planning to propose to her. Still, he needed to make her feel at ease. Hunter gently brushed away the stray hair from her face.

"You are so beautiful," he said to her softly. "I love you."

Luna looked up at him, her smile brightening the room. There he was—the Hunter she knew so well. Gazing into his eyes, she felt a wave of reassurance wash over her; everything was right, and her worries felt foolish. She trusted him completely and loved him deeply. And knowing that Hunter loved her in return was all that truly mattered.

They shared a passionate kiss, sealing their bond. Everything felt right in the world. Luna reached down, entwining her fingers with Hunter's, and looked back up into his eyes, feeling a sense of peace envelop them both.

"I'm sorry that I was short earlier," she said. "You just have been gone so much that I thought something was wrong."

"You have no reason to worry, my darling," Hunter reassured her. "All is well."

Later that day, Luna sat down at Hunter's computer to check her email. As she opened the internet browser, she noticed he had been browsing plane ticket prices for trips to and from Guatemala. Was he planning to take her back home to meet her mother and sister? Curious, she clicked on the ticket prices, only to find they had skyrocketed with the holiday season approaching. This was too expensive, she thought. It also didn't appear that any tickets had been purchased, which made her wonder if this was just a fleeting thought he had. Still, why hadn't he mentioned it to her?

Shaking off her curiosity, Luna minimized the window and opened a new one to log into her email. Once she was in, she saw an email from her sister, Lisa. It was a long message expressing how much she and their mother missed Luna and how they hoped to see her again soon. The email had been sent two weeks ago, and Luna felt a pang of guilt for not checking her inbox sooner. She reminded herself to be more diligent about staying connected.

With a sigh, she responded to her sister's email, crafting a simple but heartfelt message. She told Lisa that she loved and missed both her and their mother, and she hoped to see them in America soon.

Luna thought back to her conversation with Ella. Given what she had just seen on Hunter's computer, maybe he would pay for both her mother and sister to visit the

United States. It seemed like an expensive request, and she did not feel comfortable asking him to send her family to America. She sighed and got off of the computer, walked out of the office, and started cleaning the apartment and taking care of Adam while Hunter continued to get his gear ready for practice tomorrow.

Later that night, after Luna put Adam to bed, she walked into the bedroom and started to change into her nightgown. It had been a good but long day, and she was happy to have some alone time with Hunter. Hunter watched as she took off each layer of her clothing. His eyes were glued to her seductive body. Her curves called out to him.

“Don’t bother getting dressed,” Hunter said to her.

Luna had her nightgown in her hands. She suddenly dropped it to the ground and locked eyes with Hunter. She turned to him, bare naked. Hunter looked at her body in admiration.

“What did you have in mind?” she asked him seductively.

Luna slowly made her way to Hunter. He continued to lie on the bed and watch her movements. When she reached his side of the bed, Hunter turned over to his side.

“Let me watch you touch yourself,” he said to her softly.

Luna placed one foot on the bed, creating an inviting space between her legs that was easily accessible to Hunter. Her hands glided down her stomach, coming to rest on her wet pussy. Hunter watched intently as she slipped her fingers inside herself, her eyes closing as soft moans escaped her lips. The sight of her pleasuring herself ignited a deep arousal within him. Unable to contain his desire, he tossed aside the covers, exposing his own arousal to her.

Luna continued to touch herself, feeling the thrill of Hunter's gaze on her. The sight

of him turned on by her actions only heightened her excitement. “Now, I want to watch you,” she whispered softly, her voice a sultry invitation.

Hunter met her gaze, squirting lube into his hand before wrapping it around his hard penis. He moved his hand slowly, up and down, their eyes locked in a shared moment of intimacy. The room was thick with tension as they both indulged in their desires, each turned on by the other's touch.

Luna picked up the pace, her movements becoming more frantic as she neared her climax. Hunter, attuned to her body, could sense she was close, and he craved to feel her finish around him. He stopped his own movements, sitting up in bed and beckoning Luna closer. “Come here,” he urged, inviting her to straddle his face.

As soon as Luna sat on top of his face, Hunter enjoyed the taste of her pussy. She then released herself on his face. Hunter picked her up and moved her down to his dick. She was so wet that Hunter and his dick were ready to enter her slippery vagina. She moved back and forth while she was on top of Hunter. He then watched the pleasure spread across her face as her eyes rolled back. He felt her wet pussy tighten around him. He wanted to make her climax again.

Hunter propelled his body forward, forcing Luna to lie on her back with him on top of her. Hunter pushed himself inside of Luna, again and again, entering her as deeply as both of their bodies would let him.

“I want to make you cum again,” Hunter said to Luna. “Cum for me again, baby.”

Luna closed her eyes. She focused on the pleasant pounding sensation. She could feel every inch of Hunter inside of her. When she opened her eyes, she could see ecstasy all over Hunter's face. She knew that he was holding back until she came again. Knowing how good she was making him feel excited her. She let herself go again, and when Hunter felt her tighten around him, he let himself go, too. They came

together.

When they were finished, they both lay on the bed, exhausted. Hunter turned over onto his side and kissed Luna on the forehead. She looked up at him and smiled.

“Are you ready to train tomorrow?” she finally asked him. “It is starting to get late; do you think that you will be able to get enough rest?”

“Of course,” Hunter said to Luna. “Of course, honey. I will be fine. Also, that reminds me. Tomorrow, after training, I am taking you out to dinner. Ella will be here around five in the evening. I will have a car waiting for you out front.”

Luna smiled. She wondered what the occasion was. It all seemed so formal and planned.

“Oh?” Luna questioned. “It all seems so fancy, darling. Tell me, what is the occasion?”

Hunter looked over at her and smiled.

“The occasion,” he stated with a grin. “The occasion is that I have a surprise for you, my love.”

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The next morning, Hunter woke up early and headed to the training rink. It felt great to get back into the rhythm of things. He had missed spending time with the team and was excited to finish the season alongside them. They had maintained their position at the top of the National Hockey League, and Hunter was eager to contribute to their continued success.

When Hunter arrived at the rink, he walked in and saw his team members catching up before practice officially started.

“Hey!” Henry said happily to the team. “Hey, Hunter is back!”

Hunter had to admit it felt nice to have Henry as a friend again instead of an enemy. It made the whole thing much easier and less dramatic.

“Hunter!” another team member yelled. “We heard that you were going to play the last game of the season with us. Are you ready?”

“I will be by the time the game starts,” Hunter laughed. “I’m just happy to be back and train, man. I missed all of you.”

They continued to catch up with one another. The team inquired about Adam’s health, overall well-being, and Luna. They all seemed to care genuinely. Hunter thanked them for their genuine concern, and he also thanked them again for all showing up to the hospital that horrible time Adam had relapsed and was back in the hospital.

“Of course, man,” one team member said to Hunter genuinely.

“We are not just a team, Hunter,” another team member said sincerely to him. “We are a family. You know that. I am sure that you would do the same for any one of us if we were ever in similar situations.”

Henry nodded. He knew in his heart that he would. They were all brothers. Even though they fought at times when push came to shove, they were always there for one another, and nothing was going to change that. Hunter smiled as he walked back to the locker room to change. It felt good to be back. Training that day went beyond expectations. It was as if Hunter had never missed a beat. It all came back so naturally to him. He was born to be a hockey player.

When practice was over, Hunter went into the locker room and showered. It was almost time to meet Luna for dinner. He was so excited about his surprise for Luna, and he could not wait until he saw the look on her face at dinner. Once he was done showering, he quickly got dressed, brushed his hair, and sprayed some cologne on his body. He looked at himself in the mirror. This was the first step, a necessary action to propose to Luna.

While Hunter was across the city, Luna was putting the finishing touches on her look. She slipped into a dark green dress that fell to her shins, its thin straps elegantly highlighting her collarbones. After applying a bold coat of red lipstick, she spritzed on some expensive perfume Hunter had gifted her.

Once she finished with her makeup, Luna slipped on a pair of gold heels and admired her reflection in the mirror. However, she felt her outfit was missing something. She decided to search for a pair of pearl earrings in her jewelry box. After fastening them in place, she stepped back to take another look. She felt elegant and poised, excited for the surprise Hunter had planned.

Part of her instinctively thought that he might propose. In contrast, another part wondered if he was taking her to visit her family in Guatemala. Regardless of what

the surprise was, she knew she would love it. Hunter always had a way of making her feel special, and as long as she was with him, happiness followed.

Luna walked out of the bedroom and saw Ella playing with Adam in the living room.

“Whoa,” Ella said to Luna when she saw her walk into the room. “You are a knockout!”

Luna felt a warm blush spread across her cheeks, thrilled with how good she looked. She thanked Ella for taking care of Adam that evening, embracing and kissing them both goodbye before stepping out of the apartment. As she approached the front door of the complex, she spotted their usual driver waiting beside a sleek black car with tinted windows. He greeted her with a friendly smile and opened the back door for her.

Climbing into the car, Luna settled into the plush seat, her mind racing with curiosity about where the driver would take her.

“Where are we headed?” she asked the driver.

“Sorry, Luna,” the driver said with a smile. “Hunter made me promise not to tell you. You will just have to wait and see once we get there.”

Once the driver pulled up to the restaurant, Luna noticed where she was. She got out of the car and thanked the driver. She was standing in front of a Central American restaurant. She had been telling Hunter for weeks that she wanted to eat there. She smiled to herself. She was so lucky to have him. Luna walked inside the restaurant and went straight to the hostess’ table.

“You must be Luna,” the hostess said to her immediately. “Hunter is in the back, waiting for you. If you will, please follow me.”

Luna followed the hostess to the back of the restaurant. There was a party room at the back of the building, and Luna wondered why Hunter had rented such a large room for dinner. However, when she walked into the room, she understood why. Luna's face was filled with shock. Her chin dropped to the floor.

Hunter, Lisa, and her mom stood in the room. Hunter had brought her family in from her native country. Luna ran over to her family and embraced them. Tears started to stream down her eyes. Even though it had only been a few months since she had seen her sister and mother, having them both there in America was joyfully overwhelming. She embraced her family again. Hunter came over, and Luna looked up at him. She mouthed the words thank you to him. He nodded and smiled at her in response. She was happy, and that was all that he cared about. Her happiness was everything to him.

“Hunter was so kind to bring us in,” Lisa said. “We have been getting to know him while we were waiting for you to arrive. He is just lovely, Luna, and Mom agrees, too.”

Luna asked her mother what she thought of Hunter. Her mother responded that Hunter was a handsome and generous young man.

“You did well to find him,” her mother said.

Hunter overheard her comment and smiled before stepping into the conversation.

“Actually, I did well to find her,” Hunter said with love. “She has saved me in more ways than you both know.”

Everyone was in good spirits. The three sat down around the table and ordered wine and appetizers. Luna was so excited to eat food that was similar to what she was used to eating in her native country, and her family members agreed.

“You did well in picking this restaurant,” Lisa said to Hunter. “You get an A plus, Hunter.”

The family continued to get to know one another. They all seemed to fit together easily. It was as if it was all how it was supposed to be. Hunter watched Luna during the dinner. There was an easiness about her. It was nice to see her reunited with her family, and he was happy that he was able to meet both her sister and mother. If he was going to propose to Luna, he wanted her mother’s permission. When the dinner was over, Luna asked her family where they were staying.

“Hunter put us in the nicest hotel, Luna,” Lisa told her sister. “It is just beautiful. We are staying at The Freemont on 5 th . Hunter was nice enough to get us the penthouse. Can you imagine? Mom and I have never stayed in a place so nice! We will be here for three days. So, maybe tomorrow we can meet Adam? I hear he is already calling you, his mother. So, I guess it is time for him to meet his aunt and grandmother!”

“I would love that,” Luna responded to her sister, Lisa. “I will call the hotel in the morning, and we will make plans. I am sure you both want to sleep in. It is a long journey from home to here.”

As the dinner ended, Hunter got up from the table and went to say goodbye to Luna’s sister and her mother. Luna continued to talk to her sister, and Hunter approached her mother. He thanked her for traveling to America and for spending time with them.

“I know it means a lot to her,” Hunter said to her. “Thank you both so much for coming all the way here.”

Luna’s mother smiled. Then, she leaned in slowly and whispered in Hunter’s ear. He listened intently to what she had to say to him.

“You have my permission,” she said to him. “You have my permission to marry my

Luna. I can see how happy you two are together and how much you two love each other. Just treat her well, Hunter.”

“I will,” he responded to her happily. “I will love her with all my heart for the rest of our lives.”

Luna bid farewell to her family, watching as they made their way out the door and headed to their hotel. Turning to Hunter, she wrapped her arms around him in a warm hug, filled with gratitude for their wonderful night together.

“This was amazing,” she said to him lovingly. “Thank you so much for my surprise, darling. I loved it so much.”

“Well,” Hunter said to Luna with amusement. “Well, the night isn’t over. Perhaps there are more surprises on the way.”

He looked down at his watch. It was only half past eight. Everything was right on schedule. He looked back at her and smiled.

“It is still early,” he said to her. “Let’s go out. I know a great place. Ella will be fine with Adam. I told her that we would be home late.”

Luna smiled at Hunter and grabbed his hand.

“Let’s go,” she replied to him enthusiastically. “I want to see what else you have in store for us tonight.”

They walked up to the register and paid the bill before walking outside. The car was waiting for them and Hunter opened the door for Luna. The driver immediately drove off without direction. It appeared that he already knew where they wanted to go. Luna noticed this and thought to herself that Hunter had put some planning into the night.

Her heart began to race. Perhaps this was the night. Perhaps this was the night that Hunter proposed to her. For a moment, she thought her heart would beat out of her chest. She tried to live in the moment. She did not want to get her hopes up in case he did not propose.

The driver stopped in front of the same bar where Hunter and Luna first met. When the car stopped, Luna got out of the car slowly and looked up at the bar sign hanging in neon lights. It was just as she remembered it. Memories came back, flooding her mind, of how Hunter had saved her from that horrible date.

Hunter and Luna walked into the bar hand in hand. They walked up to the bar together and sat down on bar stools. Hunter ordered drinks for both of them. He ordered a glass of wine and a whiskey on the rocks.

“I still can’t believe how lucky I got that night,” Hunter said.

There was obvious love in his eyes as he spoke to her. Luna thanked the bartender for the drinks and let her eyes meet his. She felt butterflies again, just like the night they first met. Everything was so perfect. The night, her reunion with her family, Hunter, all of it felt exactly like out of a storybook. She hoped that it was not too good to be true. For a moment, she felt herself hold her breath.

“I love you, Luna,” Hunter said, relaxing his stance.

Luna slowly exhaled and looked back up at him.

“Why are you doing all this?” she asked Hunter lovingly. “I am so appreciative of everything. But are you doing all of this tonight? Is there some sort of special occasion?”

Hunter smiled. He gently laughed and took a sip of his whiskey. When he placed the

glass on the bar, he placed his hand in his pocket and gently felt the ring inside.

“You always have so many questions,” he said to her with a smile. “It is one of the reasons why I love you, but for tonight, just enjoy each moment, darling. Does that sound okay?”

Luna nodded her head, and they finished their drinks. They sat and talked about the future. What they both wanted out of life as individuals and what they both wanted out of life together. It felt good to talk about their future. It all felt like life was falling into place as it should be. Hunter ordered them another round of drinks. When they were finished, Hunter grabbed Luna by the hand.

“Come on,” he said to her softly. “I have another surprise for you.”

Luna followed him outside and saw the car waiting for them again. She quickly got inside the vehicle. She was eager to see what the next surprise was. Hunter sat beside her and held her hand. He looked down at her feet.

“We are going to have to get you different shoes for this surprise,” he said to her excitedly.

Luna looked down and questioned his last statement. Why would she need new shoes?

“You will see when we get there,” Hunter chuckled. “Don’t worry, darling, I have everything all figured out.”

Luna watched as they ventured out of the heart of the city. The city lights grew smaller and smaller. As they continued to drive away, Luna could feel something brewing. She looked over at Hunter and noticed how handsome he looked. She could feel it. Tonight was the night. Tonight was the night that she was going to get

engaged to Hunter, the man of her dreams.

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When they finally reached their next destination, Hunter quickly got out of the car. The driver opened up the trunk. Hunter retrieved a bag full of ice skates and warmer jackets for them to wear while ice skating. Luna looked at the supplies.

“Ice skates?” she said curiously. “I am a terrible ice skater. I’ve told you this. You will see me make a fool out of myself tonight.”

They both laughed together. Hunter reassured her that he would be there to catch her if she fell.

“It will be fun,” he said to her assumingly. “Just trust me. Come on, let’s go inside.”

Hunter had arranged for the team’s training stadium to be fully decorated and reserved exclusively for that evening. He couldn’t imagine a more perfect place to ask Luna such an important question. Hockey had played a significant role in Hunter’s life, shaping countless experiences, and it was the very thing that had brought them together. As he opened the door to the stadium, he watched Luna step inside, her eyes widening with surprise and wonder.

As soon as she walked inside the stadium, her eyes lit up, almost as bright as the stadium. Elegant strings of white lights were placed all over the ice rink and the seats of the stadium. Rose petals decorated the floor, leading to the audience’s seats and down to the ice rink. Luna could not believe how beautiful everything was. For such a large space, everything was ornately decorated for just the two of them. How did Hunter pull this off?

“Frank pulled some strings for me,” Hunter said, almost reading her mind.

“Well, then I must thank him,” Luna said while still looking around at the lights and flowers. She walked down to the opening for the rink. Hunter sat the bag on the ground and took out two jackets and two pairs of skates.

“Here,” he said to her gently. “Let’s put these on, and I will help you skate.”

Luna took the skates and the oversized coat from Hunter. She put them on. Hunter helped her get to the ice.

Luna moved onto the ice. She was a novice, but Hunter did not mind that. He liked helping her. Hunter reached her hand and helped to guide her along the ice. He even gave her some pointers as to how to skate better. Hunter let go of her hand. She wobbled, trying to find the edge of the ice rink to hold onto.

“Just trust yourself. Trust your feet,” he said to her, cheering her on. “You are gliding. It is like a dance, and you love to dance, darling.”

Luna let go of the edge of the ice rink. She wobbled a bit again but found her balance. She started to get the hang of ice skating. Hunter watched her and smiled.

“Yes!” he exclaimed. “Yes, that is it! Look at how effortless you make that look. Come on, skate to me.”

Hunter reached out his hands and urged her to skate to him. Luna attempted to glide to Hunter. However, she ended up tripping over herself and propelled her body towards him. Hunter caught her just in time before her body hit the ice hard. He helped to break her fall, and the two of them tumbled to the ice on top of one another. They both began laughing.

“I told you I was a terrible ice skater,” Luna said to Hunter, laughing. “But I do appreciate you trying to teach me.”

The couple continued to giggle together, lost in the romance of the evening. Even something as trivial as falling down didn't matter to them; they tumbled onto the ice, laughter echoing around them. As Luna looked off to the side, she spotted a small jewelry box lying on the ice. It resembled a box meant for a ring, and she gasped.

“What is that?” she asked, her curiosity piqued.

Hunter glanced over and realized that the box must have fallen from his pocket during their fall. He reached for it, feeling a rush of adrenaline. Well, now that the cat was out of the bag, it was now or never. They remained sitting on the ice, the moment hanging in the air.

Luna was speechless, her heart racing as she waited for Hunter to make his next move. Was this it? Was this the moment she had been dreaming of?

With deliberate care, Hunter opened the jewelry box and turned to face her. Inside lay a stunningly elegant diamond ring. This was really happening—Hunter was truly proposing to her.

“Luna,” Hunter said to her lovingly. “From the moment we met, it has been an adventure. I love you with all of my heart. The support you have shown me and Adam has made me realize that I cannot live without you. Will you marry me?”

Tears began to fill Luna's eyes. She could hardly see; she attempted to blink the tears away. She was overjoyed. She was able to muster out the word yes, and she nodded her head. Hunter smiled. He gently placed the beautiful engagement ring on Luna's finger. She reached her arm out in front of her to get a good look at it. It was perfect. She leaned over and kissed Hunter.

“I can't believe that this is actually happening,” she said to him happily. “You are my dream come true, Hunter.”

“You are mine,” he replied cheerfully. “This is exactly as everything should be.”

Hunter and Luna embraced once more before heading back to the vehicle, waiting for them outside.

“Is this why you had my family flown in?” she asked him inquisitively. “You had this whole thing planned?”

“Of course,” Hunter said bluntly. “I had to ask your mother’s permission to marry you before I popped the question.”

Luna leaned in and kissed Hunter in the back of the car, her heart swelling with joy. It meant so much to her that he had asked for her mother’s hand in marriage. Excitement bubbled inside her as she wondered if they could stop by the hotel to share the good news. Hunter smiled and instructed the driver to take them to where Luna’s mother and sister were staying. She could hardly wait to tell them that she was engaged.

“How do you think Adam will handle the news?” Luna asked, a hint of concern in her voice.

She wanted to ensure that Adam would be okay with Hunter remarrying. Hunter reassured her that he had already spoken to Adam about their plans. “For his age, he understands what it means,” he explained. “He’s actually happy to know that you’ll officially be his mother.”

Luna’s heart melted at his words. The thought of finally having the family she had long dreamed of filled her with overwhelming happiness.

Hunter and Luna watched as the city lights grew closer and closer. They held hands as they approached the hotel where her family was staying.

“Are they expecting us?” Luna asked Hunter. “I guess we should have called in advance.”

Hunter reassured her that they both knew that he was going to propose to her that night. They were sure to be up and awaiting the grand news of their engagement. The driver parked the car and got out to open the door. Upon getting out of the vehicle, the couple was bombarded with paparazzi.

“Hunter!” one man with a camera shouted. “Luna!” he yelled to get her attention.

“Congratulations on the new engagement, Hunter!” a woman with a camera yelled while pushing the camera into his personal space. “Luna, how does it feel to go from nanny to fiancé?” she asked Luna smugly.”

Hunter tried to move around the crowd of people. He finally found Luna’s hand and ran with her to the front entrance of the hotel. Two hotel security guards ushered them inside and created a barrier from the paparazzi. Hunter and Luna were safe inside the hotel, thank goodness. Hunter took a deep breath and looked back outside at the numerous people with photographs. It was then that he saw one man with a large camera walk over to his driver, Tony. He watched in bewilderment as Tony reached out his hand and retrieved a roll of cash from the unknown man with a camera. He heard Luna gasping. She was trying to catch her breath from all the fear and excitement. At least they were both safe in that moment.

“How did the paparazzi know already?” she asked Hunter in confusion. “You literally just proposed to me. How did they get the information so soon?”

“Tony,” Hunter said angrily. “Tony, our driver, sold us out.”

Hunter was so angry. He could not believe his trusted driver sold a story about him and Luna to the press. He felt betrayed. Tony had been his driver for the last four

years. He was amazed at what greed did to people. Loyalty was hard to find. Luna looked up and stared at Hunter. She could tell by his facial expression that he was angry. She had never seen him so mad. She wanted to calm him down. It was their special night, and she did not want anything to ruin it.

“Hey,” Luna said, grabbing Hunter’s arm. “Hey, honey. It is okay. We are safe inside the hotel now. We dodged the cameras for now. Let’s not let them ruin our night, okay?”

Hunter’s face was still stern. He felt that Tony had put both his and Luna’s lives in danger. They were bombarded by the cameras, and it was complete madness out there. If he had not acted quickly and got both himself and Luna into the hotel, who knows what would have happened? What had just occurred was unacceptable, and Hunter was not going to tolerate it. He turned to Luna.

“Go upstairs to the penthouse suite and share the wonderful news with your mother and sister,” he said to her calmly. “I am going to take care of this. I am not going to let this happen ever again.”

Luna pushed the button to activate the elevator. When it opened, she slowly walked inside the elevator and turned around to watch Hunter approach the reception area of the hotel. The doors closed.

Hunter walked to the reception desk and asked the receptionist if he could use their phone. He told them that it was an emergency, which, in a way, it kind of was, given what had just occurred. Hunter dialed the number for the car service he had hired Tony from. When the manager answered, he let him have a piece of his mind.

“I don’t care if you had nothing to do with it,” Hunter said sharply to the manager. “You should have vetted the driver before sending him my way. I want a new driver before the night is over, and I want Tony fired. I just saw him taking money from the

paparazzi, and that's unacceptable. You deal with high-end clients regularly, and if you want to keep your business running, I suggest you handle this immediately."

Hunter slammed the phone down and then looked up at the receptionist. She stared at him in horror.

"Sorry," he said to her. "Rough night."

Hunter walked over to the elevator and went up to meet Luna and her family. When he reached their room, all of his anger melted away. Lisa and Luna's mother were embracing her. They were all so excited to hear about their engagement.

"Mom, I can't believe that you knew Hunter was going to propose," Luna exclaimed. "I can't believe that you knew, and you did not say anything!"

Her mother laughed.

"Surprise!" she yelled in excitement. "I wanted it to be a wonderful surprise for you."

At the end of the visit, Luna's sister and mother promised to see them the next day. Hunter and Luna walked outside the hotel and saw their new driver waiting. They looked around them and breathed a sigh of relief that no cameras were in sight. They quickly got into the car and headed back to their apartment.

When they arrived at their apartment, Luna shared the news of her engagement to Hunter with Ella. Ella was ecstatic and overwhelmed with joy. She hugged Luna tightly.

"I knew that you two would end up together," she said lovingly.

Hunter walked into the room and checked on Adam while the two women caught up

with one another. Adam was fast asleep in his bedroom. He looked a little pale, but Hunter did not think anything of this. He walked back into the kitchen and thanked Ella for watching Adam. She assured them that Adam had a great day with her and that she would be available for the rest of the time that Luna's family was in town. They thanked her for helping them.

"Also, good job bringing in the family," Ella said to Hunter with a wink. "I wonder how you got that idea?"

They both laughed. Luna had sensed that Ella had something to do with Hunter flying her family in from Guatemala, but now it was confirmed. She hugged Ella again.

"Thank you both," she said to them kindly. "It did mean a lot to me that my family was here for his special night, and tomorrow, I am sure the magazines will have it documented first thing in the morning.

"What?" Ella asked Luna. "What are you talking about?"

"Oh, girl," Luna said to Ella with a smirk. "Oh, girl, you better sit down for this story."

Hunter walked over to the kitchen counter and started making a pot of coffee. Ella eagerly sat down at the kitchen table and waited for Hunter and Luna to place cups, cream, sugar, and coffee on the table. Ella sat across from Luna as she eagerly awaited to hear the juicy story.

"Come on, Luna!" Ella said with a chuckle. "Spill it!"

Luna poured coffee into each cup. She and Hunter walked Ella through what had occurred with their former driver and the paparazzi after their romantic engagement. Ella listened in amazement and was happy to hear that Luna had handled the situation

with the paparazzi better than she had in the past. She really was adjusting to this new life with Hunter, and the adjustment looked good on her. There was a glow about her.

Luna looked absolutely radiant. Her skin was glowing, and she had even looked a little curvier than usual in the best way. Ella made a small gasp and then took a quick drink of her coffee to cover up her excitement. Ella had noticed that glow before. Her mother had the glow once when her mother was pregnant with Ella's sister. Ella smiled to herself as she continued to listen to Hunter and Luna's story. She pondered and asked herself whether Luna was pregnant.

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The next week was filled with family time. Luna's sister and mother thoroughly enjoyed their time in America, and they were happy to see Luna's life in the United States. Hunter promised them that he, Luna, and Adam would visit Guatemala sooner rather than later. When they left, Luna and Hunter settled back into their normal routine. She tended to Adam and the home during the day while Hunter practiced for his upcoming game, which was quickly approaching.

She knew that Hunter was excited about playing the last game of the season, and she thought it was best to tell him the news she had just found out after the hockey season ended. She only had to wait a couple of weeks to tell him this important news. She was going to tell Hunter at the end of the hockey season that she was pregnant. She had only just found out when her period was late. She took the test secretly, as she did not want to distract Hunter from his hockey training.

After Luna cleaned up her and Adam's lunch, she told him to play in his room while she called Ella. When she saw that Adam was far enough away that he could not hear her, she called Ella. She felt relief when Ella picked up the phone. She had to tell someone the news.

"Ella," Luna said to her with excitement. "Ella, thank goodness you picked up the phone. I have to tell you something. Ella, you cannot tell anyone. You are sworn to secrecy, but I cannot keep this in anymore. I am pregnant!"

"I have been waiting for this call," Ella said to Luna with a laugh. "I knew that night you and Hunter told me the story about the paparazzi. Sitting there the night of your engagement, I knew that you were pregnant!"

“What?” Luna exclaimed. “How did you know? I did not even know yet?”

“You just had this glow about you,” Ella said happily.

Luna explained to Ella how she was going to tell him about her pregnancy after the last game of the season.

“I just don’t want this to be a distraction for him,” Luna said to Ella concerned. “He has been training so hard as of late, and I want him to just focus on the game.”

“Luna,” Ella said bluntly to her friend. “It is a baby, not a bomb. If anything, this would make him play harder, but you know him best.”

“Plus,” Luna interrupted Ella. “Plus, they are expected to win this game. So, telling him about this news after a big win will make the night more memorable. Right?”

“Whatever you think is best, Luna,” Ella said to her friend.

The two ladies continued to chat over the phone. Ella asked about morning sickness and any other bodily changes she may have been feeling. It felt nice for her to have someone to talk to about this. Keeping the secret of her pregnancy was too much. She was so excited about it that she just had to confide in someone, and who better than her best friend? When the two women finally got off the phone, Luna felt lighter and brighter.

Adam walked in shortly after she had finished her conversation with Ella. He climbed up onto the couch and laid his head on Luna’s stomach.

“Hey, buddy,” she said to him gently. “Are you feeling alright?”

“I’m tired,” he said softly to her. “Long day.”

“It has been a long day?” Luna teased Adam. “The day is only halfway over. Come on, honey. Let’s go work on some school stuff. You can take a nap after we are done.”

Luna got up off the couch and reached her hand out for Adam to grab it and follow her to the playroom, where they studied. Adam jumped off the couch and ran in front of Luna.

“I’ll beat you there!” he said as he laughed.

Luna laughed and chased after him. She loved being his mother. It was the best job in the world, she thought, to be a mom. She looked down at her stomach. She could not wait to be a mother to the baby growing inside her. She knew that Hunter would be the best dad.

Hunter stood on the other side of the city, hockey stick in hand and ice skates still laced up tight. Dripping with sweat, he had been training harder than ever. The break from hockey had set him back, causing him to lose some of the progress he had made earlier in the season. As the team paused for a break from drills, he bent over, resting his hands on his knees to catch his breath.

“Here,” he heard someone say to him. “Here, take this.”

Hunter looked up and saw Henry with a bottle of water. He held the bottle of water out in front of him, urging Hunter to drink it.

“It was a tough practice today,” Henry gently said to Hunter.

Hunter laughed as he gratefully accepted the water from Henry. He quickly unscrewed the cap and took a long drink, only to swallow the wrong way and break into a fit of coughing. He looked at Henry and chuckled again, shaking his head at his

clumsiness.

“Thanks, man,” Hunter said to Henry. “Thank you, but I am just out of shape. It goes quickly at this age.”

The two men laughed together. They began talking about the last game of the season. Henry asked how Adam and Luna were, and he congratulated Hunter on the engagement.

“It is nice to see you happy, man,” Henry genuinely told Hunter. “I know that we were not always the best of friends, but since Luna came into your life, I can see how happy you are.”

Hunter patted Henry’s back and thanked him. The two men finished drinking their water and got up to finish the rest of the drills. Hunter wiped the sweat off his face. He was ready to get back to work. He was leaving all of his worries and frustrations on the ice rink. He was ready for the last game of the season. As practice wrapped up, Frank approached Hunter and brought him over to the side of the ice rink.

“How are you feeling? He asked him. “You looked solid on the ice today. Good work. Are you ready for the game?”

Hunter nodded enthusiastically. He was ready. He needed this game to feel normal and apart from the team again. Things were great with Luna, but Adam’s illness had caused stress Hunter needed to get rid of. Hockey would be the cure for that. Frank nodded back.

“Alright,” he said reassuringly. “Go get some rest, and I will see you an hour before the game. Say hello to Luna for me.”

Frank and Hunter exchanged farewells before Hunter stepped outside to greet his new

driver, who was patiently waiting. He slid into the car and watched the ice rink shrink in the distance as they drove away. The next time he stepped onto the ice, it would be game time, and he felt ready. Excitement bubbled within him at the thought of giving his all for the end of the season. Both Luna and Adam would be there, cheering him on, and their support meant everything. With his team and family gathered under the same roof, he couldn't imagine anything better.

When Hunter arrived at his apartment, he walked inside to see Luna cooking dinner. Adam was sitting at the kitchen table with a coloring book and crayons. It felt nice to come home to a full family, he thought to himself. He hugged Adam hello before kissing Luna.

“Hello, my soon-to-be wife,” he said to her lovingly.

“Hello, my soon-to-be husband,” she responded to him with a smile.

The family all sat around the table and ate dinner together. While Adam was eating his spaghetti, Hunter looked at him, and concern grew across his face.

“Adam, honey,” Hunter said with concern to his son. “Adam, are you feeling okay? You look a little pale again this evening. Are you in pain, honey?”

Adam continued to eat his food. He shook his head.

“I am fine, Daddy,” he said to his dad. “I am just a little tired.”

Adam continued to eat his spaghetti, and Hunter continued to look at his son.

“Has he looked like this all day?” he asked Luna.

She told him that he had been tired today, but that they had also had a full day of

schoolwork. They discussed whether or not they should take him to the hospital, but Adam told them once again he was not in any pain.

“We will just have to keep an eye on him,” Hunter said seriously to Luna.

“I will watch him closely,” Luna responded to Hunter. “I won’t let anything bad happen to him, my darling.”

They all finished their dinner. Luna cleaned up the mess in the kitchen while Hunter prepared his gym bag for the hockey game. Luna put Adam to bed, and once she was sure he was asleep, she walked back to the bedroom and saw Hunter lying on the bed with a book in his hands.

Luna stood at the entry way and slowly began taking her clothes off. She waited for him to notice her undressing, and when he did, he put the book down on the nightstand and smiled up at her mischievously.

Luna walked over to Hunter naked. He looked up at her with admiration and reached under the covers to take his shorts off. Then, he pulled off the covers to reveal himself to her. His dick stood out, and Luna felt herself get wet at just the sight of him.

“Come closer,” he said to her softly.

She did as he told her to do. She crawled onto the bed and stopped once her mouth was in line with his hard penis. She reached her head downward and placed her mouth all over him. Hunter laid his head back and enjoyed the sensation of her mouth on him. Luna’s head bounced up and down, and Hunter ran his fingers through her hair as she pleased him.

When she lifted her head, her eyes met his. Desire spoke to both of them. They

wanted to feel every part of one another.

“Turn over,” Hunter ordered Luna. “I want to take you from behind.

Luna smiled seductively and then turned over so her body was on all fours. Hunter situated himself directly behind her. He gently placed his hands on each of her hips and gently inserted himself inside of his fiancé. Luna moaned with pleasure.

“Yes,” she moaned to him. “Yes, baby. Just like that. Give it to me just like that.”

Hunter moaned as listening to Luna talk dirty to him almost put him over the edge too quickly. He quickly pulled himself out of her. He did not want to finish without making her cum.

“My goodness, baby,” Hunter said with a chuckle. “You keep talking to me like that, I am going to cum.”

“I like making you cum,” Luna bluntly said to him.

“I need to make you cum first,” he said to her.

Luna turned over onto her back. Hunter took a deep breath as he looked at her lying there. She looked so beautiful. Her curves were perfect. Her hourglass shape was elegantly seductive. Her subtle nipples were hard, almost as if they were begging Hunter to get back inside her wet pussy. Hunter placed his mouth all over Luna. He started by kissing her stomach before burying his face in her breasts. He placed her hard nipples in his mouth before pushing himself back inside of her.

Luna reveled in the pleasure as Hunter moved his body up and down on top of her. She arched her back and wrapped her legs around his waist. He thrust deeper inside of her. They both moaned with joy as their bodies pleased each other. Their bodies

moved in unison, and eventually, they reached their climaxes together.

When they were done, they both lay on the bed totally exhausted. Luna had stolen all of his mana. He would sleep well after that.

Luna got up from the bed and grabbed a clean washcloth from the bathroom. She cleaned herself off and then placed the washcloth under warm water again. She walked over and cleaned Hunter's body off. He continued to lay in bed. She could tell that he was exhausted. She got back into bed and kissed his forehead.

"I love you," she said to Hunter sincerely. "You are going to play well. Don't worry about the game. You've got this."

Hunter appreciated these words of encouragement. Although he was excited about the upcoming game, he also was nervous. It had been several months since he had been on this ice in front of so many people. He did not want to let anyone down, especially his team. He looked up at Luna with love in his eyes and heart.

"I love you too," he said to her softly. "I love you so much."

The couple fell asleep in each other's arms. Tomorrow would be a big day for everyone. Luna was bringing Adam and Ella to the game. They had front-row seats, which was exciting for everyone. Both Hunter and Luna slept soundly. While they were both fast asleep, Adam was in his room. They did not know it, but he was starting to develop pain. He was slowly growing paler, and although he was asleep, tomorrow would be a challenge for him. Only no one knew it yet.

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When it was finally time for Hunter's comeback game, the nerves had left his body. He could feel the adrenaline pumping through his veins, but he welcomed the sensation. He could hear the crowd cheering from inside the locker room. He finished putting on his gear before joining the rest of the team in the hallway. When he left the locker room, he joined his huddled teammates. They listened attentively as Frank gave them an uplifting speech about finishing the season on a win. They were the number-one hockey team in the National Hockey League, after all. Frank expected nothing less than a win.

"Go out there and leave everything out on the ice!" Frank yelled in excitement.

The team roared and cheered. They were ready for this. They were ready to play hockey.

Luna, Ella, and Adam were in the front row of the stadium. Ella was excited, as she had never attended a live hockey game before. Luna was happy that she could take Ella with her and Adam and enjoyed seeing her friend have fun. Ella rarely did things or took time for herself. Adam sat down in his seat quietly. In fact, he had been quiet all day.

Luna noticed Adam's demeanor and spoke to him to ensure that he was okay.

"Adam," she said softly, kneeling down to his level. "Aren't you excited to see Daddy play?"

Adam nodded slowly, but his expression remained serious.

“Is something wrong, sweetheart?” Luna asked gently, concern creeping into her voice.

Adam shook his head but stayed quiet. Luna glanced up at Ella, who had been observing the exchange. Ella shrugged her shoulders, conveying her uncertainty.

“I hope he isn’t having another flare-up,” Luna said, worry evident in her tone as she turned to her friend.

Suddenly, the crowd began cheering louder and louder. The team was skating on the ice. Luna looked closely to find Hunter.

“There he is!” she exclaimed. “There he is! There is Daddy, Adam! Look!”

Adam got up from his seat with a smile on his face. He was overjoyed and began jumping up and down while clapping his hands. The game was about to start, and everyone was excited to see Hunter back on the ice.

On the ice, Hunter felt his heart pounding in his chest. He wasn’t afraid; he was ready to play. After weeks of intense training for this game, he was determined not to let his teammates—or himself—down. As he skated into position, he smiled at the roar of the crowd cheering for him. It felt amazing to be back on the ice, and the game began.

Each player on the team gave their all. Still, the opposing team matched their energy, making victory seem more challenging to grasp than everyone had anticipated. For the spectators, it was a thrilling contest. The tension in the arena was palpable; just when it seemed like one team would score, an unexpected turn of events would keep everyone on the edge of their seats. Luna understood now why Hunter loved this game so much. It was exhilarating. She was certain that the thrill of watching the action unfold couldn’t compare to the rush of actually playing.

By halftime, the two teams were tied with one another. Ella looked over at Luna.

“How do you think it is going to go during the second half?” Ella asked curiously.

“It will go fine,” Luna said reassuringly. “They will win, for sure. They are undefeated. This is their season!”

Luna lifted her right hand and began to bite her nails. She knew it was a bad habit, but the intensity of the situation called for it. Ella glanced over and noticed Luna's nervous gesture.

“Stop that!” she said sharply. “We tell all the kids we nanny for not to do that. You know better.”

Ella spoke with a laugh, feeling like a big sister to Luna. Luna chuckled and shook her head, acknowledging that Ella was right. They often reminded Adam not to put his fingers in his mouth, emphasizing how germs and illnesses spread. Glancing at Adam, who was still sitting quietly in his chair, Luna felt a wave of concern wash over her. He hadn't been as vocal as she had hoped during the first half of the game. Each time she asked if something was wrong, he replied no.

“I think we need to take him to the doctor this week,” Luna said to Ella, her worry palpable. “This isn't normal. He's a child; he should be bursting with energy, especially while watching his dad play hockey. He loves hockey almost more than Hunter does.”

As the two women continued to talk about Adam's recent behavior and health, Hunter and the other men sat in the locker room. Frank was ticking off the second half of the game's plans. He detailed and showcased various plays with a large marker and poster paper for the team.

“Number seven is slow and does not defend the line,” Frank said harshly. “Willis, you stay on him and communicate when there is an opening!”

The men listened intently to every word Frank spoke. They were eager to win, but they knew they would have to fight hard for this victory. It was the last game of the season, and losing at the final moment after an undefeated run was simply not an option for any team member, especially Hunter. He felt a strong desire to prove himself after being away for so long.

“I guess this was not going to be as easy as a game as we all thought,” Henry said to Hunter as he scooted himself closer to him. “Hey, are Luna and Adam here tonight?”

“Yeah, they are,” Hunter said to Henry with frustration. “Don’t get me wrong. I am so happy that they are here, but I am going to be upset if we lose on the same night that they both showed up to watch me play.”

“Oh, we will win,” Henry said to Hunter with confidence. “We just have to play a little harder. Don’t worry. We will remain number one.”

After listening to the rest of Frank’s plans for the second half of the game, the team ended the meeting by cheering together. Everyone was amped up and ready to go. The team skated out onto the ice together. The crowd cheered and roared. The last half of the game was going to be theirs. Within five minutes of starting the second half of the game, the team scored again, putting them in the lead. Ella and Luna cheered loudly from the stands. When Luna looked over at Adam, she saw him hunched over in pain. She got down to eye level with him.

“Adam, honey,” she said in a panic to him. “Adam, honey, what is wrong? Are you in pain?”

As soon as Luna asked Adam if he was in pain, he collapsed to the ground. Their

worst fears had come true—Adam was relapsing and experiencing another flare-up of his sickle cell disease. It broke her heart to see him in such pain. She quickly caught Ella's attention.

“We need to call the driver!” Luna yelled over the noise of the game.

It was difficult to hear amid the excitement; the match continued, and no one else seemed to notice Adam hunched over in distress. She desperately wanted to inform Hunter that they were leaving the stadium, but there was no way to reach him on the ice, and stopping the game wasn't an option. Ella rummaged through her purse and pulled out her cell phone.

“Hello, this is Ella,” she said urgently into the phone. “Can you please meet us out front? We have to take Adam to the hospital immediately. It's an emergency.”

Luna picked Adam up and hurriedly rushed to the exit door. Adam remained barely conscious in her arms. Luna was scared. She did not want to admit it to herself, but she was scared. Ella grabbed their remaining belongings and rushed out behind the two of them.

When they stepped outside, their car was already waiting. Luna carefully placed Adam in the car, making sure his seatbelt was secure.

She and Ella quickly followed, slipping into their seats just as the driver sped off, barely giving them time to close the doors. As they drove off, Luna tried calling both Hunter and Frank, but none of her calls went through. They must have had their phones off for the game, so she left voicemails.

“Hunter,” she said to him in a rushed tone. “Hunter, darling, it is me, Luna. I need you to get to the hospital on West and 7th as soon as you can. Adam is in pain. Ella and I are on our way to the hospital now. We think he is having a flare-up. Call me

back as soon as you can.”

Her words came out in a rush, and she wasn't sure if she had even enunciated them properly; panic had taken over. She couldn't help it—her emotions were overwhelming. Turning to Adam, she saw him hunched over in his seat, moaning in pain. Each grimace on his face felt like a dagger to her heart. She hated seeing him suffer. Ella reached out, gently rubbing his back, sharing the anguish of seeing him so unwell.

“It will all be okay,” she said out loud in the car to Adam and Luna. “Everything is going to be alright.”

Luna continued to call Hunter to get a hold of him, but she knew that he would not be able to answer until he was off the ice. It was not his fault. This was just bad timing. She saw the lights of the hospital quickly approaching, and she breathed a sigh of relief while looking down at Adam. At least he would be getting the help he so desperately needed soon.

When the car stopped in front of the hospital, Luna quickly took Adam and rushed into the emergency department. The nurses promptly took him away for preliminary tests while she stayed behind to fill out the necessary paperwork. As she scribbled her details, her hand began to shake uncontrollably, leaving small black marks across the forms. Worry and panic washed over her as her thoughts spiraled into the worst-case scenarios. Would Adam ever live anything resembling a normal life? Would he be trapped in a cycle of pain?

Still trembling, she glanced down at her stomach, feeling the weight of another worry. Would the baby growing inside her be healthy? The thought of having another sick child was almost unbearable. Adam's illness was already a heavy burden on her heart; she couldn't imagine enduring the same struggles again.

Just then, Ella entered the room and sat beside Luna. “Hey,” she said softly, noticing her friend’s distress. “Are you okay?”

Luna shook her head, unsure of how to express what she felt. Maybe it was the pregnancy hormones clouding her thoughts. What she knew for certain was that she couldn’t wait for Hunter to arrive. Ella recognized that this wasn’t the time for small talk; the gravity of the situation loomed over them. Luna reached for Ella’s hand, grateful for her friend’s support during this challenging time. The two women sat in the waiting room, anxiously waiting for any updates on Adam’s condition from the medical staff.

Meanwhile, on the ice, Hunter was fully immersed in the game. With just five minutes left on the clock, the two teams were once again tied. Sweat dripped down every player’s face, a testament to the intensity of the match. Frank shouted from the sidelines, rallying his team with fervor, determined that they would not accept defeat.

“We only need one more goal!” he yelled. “One more! Come on! The clock is ticking down!”

Hunter and Henry looked at one another. It was crazy to think about the total transformation that their friendship had taken. Almost half a year ago, they were sworn enemies of one another. Now, there was a level of respect there, almost brother life.

“You take number twenty-seven,” Henry said. “He likes to hang left. You block him, and I will block number sixteen.”

Hunter nodded in agreement. The two men got ready, and when the referee blew the whistle, they challenged their opponents. Suddenly, Hunter heard the sound of cheering. He had been focused on blocking his opponent, so he did not know what had occurred. He looked up at the scoreboard and smiled. His team had just scored.

Hunter was elated. Henry's plan had worked. He searched the ice to find him. When the two men saw one another, they nodded. They had done it. The buzzer soon rang. Time had run out. They had won the last game of the season. They were truly undefeated.

As the men skated off the ice and returned to the locker room, everyone was in good spirits. It was a good feeling to know that they were number one in the entire national hockey league. Hunter started to change his clothes when Frank walked up to him.

"Good game," he said to him genuinely. "You made one hell of a comeback. If it had not been for you and Henry blocking their two best players, we would not have been able to score again and would have gone into overtime."

"It was Henry's idea," Hunter said happily. "He was the one who took charge so we could win."

Frank smiled. He was happy to see that Henry and Hunter were getting along. It sure made coaching the team easier.

"Are you excited to celebrate with Luna?" Frank asked Hunter. "I looked for her, Ella, and Adam, but I couldn't find them in the crowd. I thought you had them sit right up front?"

"I did," Hunter stated bluntly. "You did not see them out there?"

"I looked, but I couldn't find them," Frank replied to him.

A sinking feeling traveled down into Hunter's stomach. He could not describe exactly what he was feeling, but it was strange and negative. He could sense that something was wrong. Hunter did not even bother showering. He quickly ran to his locker and searched for his cell phone. When he turned his phone on, he saw that he had

numerous missed calls and several text messages from Luna. Before he could read what the messages said, Frank came running back into the locker room.

“I have several missed calls from Luna,” Frank said with anxiety. “Is something wrong? She never calls me.”

Hunter explained that he was attempting to find that out. He tried calling Luna back, but his calls went straight to voicemail. She did not know it, but her phone had died while she was sitting in the waiting room. Hunter started listening to the voicemails and reading the text messages that she left him.

When he finally realized what was wrong, his face turned pale.

“Hunter,” Frank said concerned. “Hunter, what is it, son?”

“It is Adam,” Hunter stated with sadness. “It is Adam. He is in the hospital. He had a flare-up. Apparently, Luna has been trying to get a hold of me, and I missed all of her calls and texts. She has been at the hospital now for over an hour, I am sure.”

“Well, let’s go, then,” Frank said with certainty. “You didn’t think I would let you go alone, did you?”

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Hunter sat quietly in the passenger seat as Frank drove them to the hospital. A mix of guilt and gratitude swirled within him. He felt guilty for missing Luna's calls and text messages and for not being at the hospital with Adam. At least he was on his way now; that was the best he could do. It felt as if he were being pulled between two worlds: the life of a famous hockey player and that of a dedicated family man. Perhaps this was just life—things weren't always easy. Despite the trauma he and his son had experienced, he knew he had more than most, and they were incredibly blessed. So, he tried not to complain.

When he thought about it seriously, he couldn't imagine giving up either world. He understood he would need to find a way to balance both, especially now that he was marrying Luna. She deserved a husband who would be truly present, and he never wanted either Luna or Adam to feel like they were second to his love for hockey.

Frank remained silent as he drove, understanding that Hunter preferred not to talk during serious moments. He had been with Hunter through enough difficult situations to know when to keep quiet.

When they arrived at the hospital, Frank pulled up to the front entrance. "Go ahead and go in," he said calmly. "I'll park the car and meet you in the waiting room. Go be with Luna."

Hunter felt grateful for Frank's support during this challenging time and watched as Frank drove off into the parking lot. He quickly turned and briskly walked into the hospital, scanning the waiting room for Luna but not seeing her. His eyes continued to search the area until he finally spotted Ella sitting alone. He rushed over to her, wondering where Luna was.

“Thank God that you are finally here,” Ella said with intense emotion. “Don't worry, Adam is fine. They are giving him medications now, but he did have another flare-up. His pain came on pretty strongly this time. There is no fever, though, which is good.”

Hunter was relieved to hear that Adam was being taken care of. The fact that there was no fever was excellent news. Adam had struggled with both getting and being able to naturally break fevers before. At least his pain was being monitored and managed. He looked around the waiting room again.

“Where is Luna?” Hunter asked with curiosity. “Is she still here?”

“She... she is in the bathroom,” Ella stuttered. “She... she is not feeling well.”

Hunter was confused and concerned by this remark.

“Is she sick too?” Hunter seriously asked Ella.

Ella stumbled over her words, reluctant to be the one to tell Hunter that Luna was pregnant. It was important news that Luna should share herself, but unfortunately, she was experiencing morning sickness at night. This was incredibly inconvenient, especially given the circumstances. There were only so many excuses Ella could make for Luna's nausea and illness.

Hunter noticed Ella's nervous nature. He could not handle Luna being sick as well. Why was she beating around the bush about her condition? What exactly was going on? He had to know the truth.

“Ella,” Hunter said seriously. “Ella, what is going on?”

“You have to talk to Luna,” Ella gently responded to Hunter. “Talk to her. It is not my place to say, but I promise you it is nothing bad.”

"Nothing bad? She is in the bathroom sick. How could that be nothing bad?" Hunter thought to himself. He turned his head when he noticed someone approaching—Luna, slowly walking toward him while wiping her mouth. Despite her illness, she radiated a certain glow. Hunter's eyes traveled from her face down to her slightly rounded stomach. She looked beautiful, even radiant, but something about her seemed different.

Suddenly, he swallowed hard. "Luna," he said thoughtfully, "are you... are you pregnant?"

Luna blushed and glanced at Ella. "Ella!" she shouted. "I told you not to say anything!"

"No, no," Hunter reassured her, placing his hands on either side of her face. "She didn't tell me, darling. I just pieced it together when I heard you were sick in the bathroom. Why didn't you tell me sooner?"

"Your game," Luna replied softly. "I didn't want to ruin it for you. I wanted you to stay focused. Please, tell me you all won."

"We won," Hunter said, his voice filled with joy. "We did win, but I won a second time tonight. We're going to have a baby together."

Luna sighed in relief. Although deep down, she expected Hunter to be happy about her pregnancy, fear and doubt still crept into her mind. She was happy to know that he was on board with all of this. The couple embraced one another. Hunter held her close to him. He was so happy beyond compare. This baby was going to be the product of his and Luna's love for one another. As they embraced, a doctor walked up to the three of them.

"Adam is awake and can be seen now," the doctor told them. "His pain is

manageable. We will be sending you all home with some pain medication later tonight. Use it sparingly. He is a trooper. I know that he will be excited to see you all.”

Just as the doctor was finished speaking, Frank walked into the waiting room. Hunter filled him in on the situation and gestured for him to follow them to Adam’s room. When they all walked in, Adam was awake and in good spirits. He wanted to hear all about the hockey game, which he was upset he missed the rest of. Hunter explained how he tackled a guy and how the team scored the winning point at the last minute. He re-enacted each scene with theatrical importance so as to keep Adam’s spirits up. Adam loved every minute of this story.

When the time came for him to get discharged, Hunter thanked Frank for his support. He also told Ella to go home and get some rest. He thanked her for being there for them as well. When he, Adam, and Luna got back to the apartment, they put Adam to bed.

He could tell that Luna was tired. He was, too, but he had not yet showered after the game, and he knew that he needed to have one before climbing into bed. As he started getting undressed, Luna stared at his chiseled body. She noticed a few bruises starting to appear from the hockey game. She had to remind herself how violent of a sport hockey was. Hunter caught her staring at him and the bruises all over his body.

“Do not worry,” he said to her with love. “Don’t worry, baby. They will heal.”

Luna slowly walked over to Hunter and gently kissed each of his bruises. Her mouth moved from his back to his arms and then, finally, to his lips. Hunter and Luna kissed passionately. He wrapped his arms around her waist and drew her closer. He wanted to feel the touch of her skin against his. She looked up at him. Then, her eyes briefly darted down to her stomach.

“Do you promise that this does not scare you?” she asked him intently. “I am so excited about this baby. I just want to make sure that you are as well.”

Hunter leaned in and kissed Luna again, feeling the warmth of her lips against his. The gentle touch eased her tension, and she breathed relief as relaxation washed over her. She wrapped her arms around Hunter’s neck, standing on her tiptoes to kiss his forehead softly. He appreciated the gesture, but a part of him ached knowing how much worry weighed on her about carrying their child.

Gently, he pulled her arms away from his neck, bringing her to eye level with him. It was crucial for him that she understood every word he was about to say. He needed her to know how he felt. “You know that I’m excited to have a child with you, right?” he asked, his tone serious yet tender.

“I just wanted to make sure, my darling,” Luna replied, her eyes searching his for reassurance. “I know this is all a lot, and everything is happening so fast for us. I just don’t want you to feel overwhelmed.”

Hunter took a deep breath, wanting to convey the depth of his emotions. “I love you,” he stated firmly. “I love you, and that automatically means I love anything that comes from you. Anything we create together will be cherished with my whole heart, and that includes this baby. Okay, my love?”

As her eyes glistened with un-shed tears, Luna nodded, a mix of joy and relief washing over her. She felt an overwhelming sense of security in their relationship. The worries of the future faded just a little, replaced by the warmth of Hunter's unwavering support and love. They were embarking on a beautiful journey together, and they would navigate whatever challenges lay ahead.

It was a relief to hear these words straight from his mouth. She wrapped her arms around his neck again and leaned to kiss him. Hunter welcomed the affection. He

embraced her and kissed her back to let her know how much he loved her and their unborn baby. This was going to be a new stepping stone in their love story. She had no reason to fear. He would be with her every step of the way.

That night, Luna and Hunter made sweet love. Their bodies matched each other in effort, force, and pleasure. Their bodies intertwined with one another like a needle and thread. They were meant to be together, and their bodies fit together like a glove. They revealed each other's pleasure. Only they knew how to satisfy one another, and when the sweet time came, they both climaxed at the same time. It felt surreal to feel each other's body clench with joy.

Hunter lay beside her, between the worlds of slumber and reality. He began thinking about their baby and their future, and he started thinking about his engagement to Luna and how she was his fiancée. He wanted this baby to be born under a true union; he wanted this baby to be born while he and Luna were legally considered married. These thoughts consumed him so much that he was unable to speak. So, he gently shook Luna awake from her slumber. He patiently waited until she was conscious. What he had to say was important, and he wanted to ensure that she was awake enough to listen to every word that he had to say.

“Luna, my love, are you awake now?” he gently asked her. “I have something important that I want to talk to you about.”

Luna placed her fingers by her eyelids. She rubbed her eyes until she was certain that she could understand exactly what it was that he had woken her up for. It must have been something important if Hunter was willing to wake her up from her sleep to talk to her. Luna slowly blinked her eyes open. He waited until she was awake enough to have some commentary.

“Do you want some coffee?” Hunter randomly asked her.

Luna looked at the clock. It was almost twelve-thirty in the morning. This must have been an important conversation if Hunter had been willing to wake her up in the middle of the night when she was pregnant. Luna looked down at her stomach before answering him.

"Better make it decaf coffee," she said to him, without dismay.

If Hunter was going to wake her up in the middle of the night, Luna assumed he was prepared to meet all her pregnancy needs. She didn't feel guilty about requesting a specific type of coffee; if anything, he should be happy to oblige her at this hour. After all, she was the one growing a new life inside her. What else could he expect? Since finding out she was pregnant, she had been extra careful about everything that came into contact with her body. No reasonable person could blame her for that.

When Hunter came back with the coffee, he spoke to her about the wedding. He described his desire to marry Luna before she had the baby.

"That leaves us less than a year to plan the wedding," she said, concerned.

"We could elope," Hunter calmly stated. "We do not have to have anything fancy, do we?"

Luna's heart sank. She did not have to have the biggest or fanciest wedding in the world, but she did want to have something special. She had never been married before, and she did not plan on getting married more than once. This was it for her. Hunter had already had the big wedding. Perhaps that's why this was not a big deal for him. Luna picked up her coffee from the nightstand and took a sip of it. Hunter watched and could see from the reaction on her face that she did not like the idea of eloping or simply going to the courthouse.

"That is not what you want to do, is it?" Hunter asked her. "You want the big

wedding?”

“I’ve always dreamed of having the perfect dress and flowers and having all my friends and loved ones there, you know?” Luna replied sadly. “I’ve never had that before, and we plan on spending the rest of our lives together, right? So this is my only chance.”

Hunter drank his coffee and listened to her. He understood what she meant; he knew it was important for girls to have their dream wedding, but he didn’t want their baby to be born out of wedlock. He tried to express this sentiment to Luna.

“But we are going to be married regardless,” she said to him with emotion. “So, what does it really matter? No matter what, we are going to be together.”

Hunter nodded his head. Perhaps she was right. Now, he felt silly for waking her up in the middle of the night. He finished his cup of coffee and then placed the empty cup on his nightstand. He leaned over and grabbed Luna’s hands.

“I just wanted to do the right thing for the baby,” Hunter said seriously. “But as long as we are together, I know that we will do right by this child. We are going to be a family, and that is all that matters.”

Luna smiled. She leaned over and kissed him on the cheek.

“So, does this mean that I get to plan my dream wedding?” she said while looking into his eyes.

“You can have everything you want and more,” Hunter told her with love.

Source Creation Date: July 23, 2025, 10:19 am

The next months were filled with numerous meetings with Luna's newly hired wedding planner. Her wedding planner, Cynthia, was a real go-getter, and together, they were ensuring that Luna had the wedding of a lifetime. She was so excited to be planning her dream wedding. She had her flowers and colors picked out. Her colors for the wedding were purple and red, which she felt truly represented the passion and love she and Hunter had for each other. She would be carrying a bouquet of tiger lilies, as would her bridesmaids, Ella and Lisa.

Hunter had been home more since the hockey season was over. He was still training but not as hard. It had been nice to have him home more, and Luna appreciated the help around the house and with Adam since she had developed more into her pregnancy. Adam's health had been stable; he was getting ready to start kindergarten. Hunter could not believe how big he was getting, and everyone was so happy to know he was in good spirits and health. Hunter and Luna finally broke the news to Adam that he was going to be a big brother, and to their surprise, he was elated at the news. He was excited to be a big brother, which made Hunter and Luna happy.

Luna's pregnancy had caused her to have morning sickness and to grow into a new size of pants. She was still getting used to how different her body looked. Hunter assured her that she was still beautiful, but she had her reservations. She knew it was normal to feel this way, as her body was changing dramatically in a short amount of time, after all. Between taking care of the house, getting Adam ready for school, planning a wedding, and being pregnant, she felt that she had a lot on her plate. Still, she felt as if everything in the world was right as it should be. She didn't mind all of the responsibilities. In fact, she enjoyed taking care of the household, and she knew that Hunter appreciated it as well. She looked down at her phone and saw that Cynthia, the wedding planner, was calling her.

Luna: Hello.

Cynthia: Hey Luna, how are you?

Luna: Hey, Cynthia! I am doing well; I am just busy with all these wedding details. Are we still good to meet at Cipriani's to try on wedding dresses today?

Cynthia: Of course! I'm actually really excited to see what dresses you've had in mind.

Luna: Well, I've narrowed it down to a few options. Noon works for you, right?

Cynthia: Absolutely. I'll be there. Can't wait!

Luna got off the phone with Cynthia and looked at the clock. It was already ten in the morning. She still had to call the caterer and ensure her mother and sister's flights were scheduled. Luna sighed. She went and changed clothes. While she was getting dressed, Hunter walked in from his office.

"How is it going, honey?" he asked her. "Are you going dress shopping today?"

"I sure am," she replied. "Did you want to come with me?"

Hunter shook his head. He told her that it was bad luck for the groom to see the bride in her dress before they were married. It was an American superstition. Luna laughed. She told Hunter that it was a silly superstition and that they had no reason to worry.

"I actually think it would be good if you came," she said to him honestly. "Maybe they can ensure the measurements for your suit are still good. You have bulked up with more muscle lately."

Luna looked at Hunter with fire in her eyes. He looked good—more muscular

lately—and he laughed, enjoying her admiration. Finally, he agreed to go wedding dress shopping with her. The two continued getting ready while they waited for Ella to arrive to watch Adam. When there was a knock at the door, Luna rushed to let Ella into the apartment.

“My goodness, you’re getting so big!” Ella exclaimed, looking at Luna. “I guess you’ll pop soon!”

Luna glanced down at her stomach. Approaching her eighth month of pregnancy, she realized she had been so busy planning the wedding that she hadn’t noticed how quickly her pregnancy had flown by. She hadn’t fully grasped how close she was to going into labor.

Ella and Luna exchanged pleasantries, and when it was time to go, Adam ran to the front door and hugged Hunter and Luna goodbye.

“I am going to be a big brother soon!” Adam yelled with excitement as he pointed at her belly.

“Well, we still have some time,” she said to Adam.

They all said goodbye to one another. Luna and Hunter walked out of the apartment complex and into the car, waiting for them outside. When she got in the car, she saw an old newspaper from two days ago. She picked it up and read it.

The newspaper article covered Luna and Hunter’s engagement, a topic that still occasionally appeared in the press, especially after the team's latest victory. With an undefeated season under their belt, Hunter had become one of the most popular players among journalists, ensuring their relationship remained a topic of interest. Luna read the headline: “Nanny Engaged to Hot Hockey Player.” She remembered how such headlines used to upset her, making her feel sick with anxiety. But now, she found she didn't care. She had grown significantly, both as an individual and in her

relationship with Hunter.

Surprisingly, the news of her pregnancy had yet to reach the tabloids. Luna wondered if the paparazzi simply hadn't caught wind of it or if they had moved on to the latest hot topic. With a sigh, she tossed the newspaper aside. Hunter observed her, noting how calm she was. It made him happy to see that she was no longer letting the press get under her skin.

Luna saw Cynthia waiting for them on the sidewalk at Cipriani's. She greeted them as they got out of the car. Hunter told the driver to pick them up in two hours. The driver nodded in agreement. The three of them entered the dress shop and looked at wedding dresses.

The seamstress explained to Luna that exact measurements could not be taken until after Luna had her baby. Today would just be about finding the right style of dress, and then Luna would return to the dress shop in a month or so. She did not worry. They had plenty of time. The wedding would not be until next summer.

Luna looked through the dresses and eventually found the most perfect lace, long-sleeved dress. It had a vintage feel to it, and it looked so elegant. Luna knew that the seamstress could not take her measurements that day, but she wanted to find out if there was a way she could still try the dress on. She asked an assistant in the store to find that dress style in her current size.

"Do you want to get a sense of what it will look like?" she asked Hunter with earnest.

Hunter nodded, excitement bubbling within him at the thought of seeing Luna in a wedding dress. He couldn't wait to marry her. The store assistant entered the dressing room with Luna to help her.

Although the dress was a bit tight, it fit her well. She gazed into the mirror, imagining how it would look once her body returned to normal after pregnancy.

Suddenly, there was a light knock on the door. “Are you going to show me?” Hunter called out. “I want to see how it looks.”

Luna opened the dressing room door and slowly stepped out, catching Hunter's gaze. He was in awe; she looked stunning. She twirled to admire herself in the mirror again. The dress was perfect.

“You are so beautiful,” Hunter said, his voice filled with admiration.

Luna turned toward him, but as she did, she felt something wet trickling down her leg. Looking down, she realized in horror that her water had just broken—right there in the wedding dress. Panic washed over her; she thought she had more time, but reality hit: she was about to go into labor. Hunter watched in shock as the situation unfolded before him.

“Oh, my goodness!” he said to her with excitement. “It is time! There is a to-go bag in the car. I will call the driver and have him pick us up here pronto. Are you excited?”

Luna sat down on the couch. Her contractions were starting to become fast and painful, and the closer she got to having the baby, the more scared she became. She was going to become a mother, and although she was excited, she was scared too. She went back into the dressing room and quickly changed into her regular clothes. Then, Hunter and Luna rushed outside and got into the car. Cynthia wished them good luck and told them that she would be in touch soon.

When they finally got to the hospital, Luna was rushed back into a room. Hunter held her hand every step of the way, but he could tell that she was nervous.

“You are going to do great, honey,” he reassured her. “You have nothing to worry about.”

Luna held on tightly to Hunter's hand. She did not think that she could do this without his support. Time passed, and finally, late that night, Luna gave birth to a beautiful baby girl. Luna could not believe how much she loved her already.

"She is beautiful," Hunter said. "I can't believe that we made her together."

Luna and Hunter were in awe of their little girl. Within two days, Luna was discharged from the hospital and was able to go home. They both were excited to introduce their little girl, who they decided to name Lily, to Adam. Luna walked in with baby Lily in her arms.

"She is so beautiful," Ella said to Hunter and Luna. "Congratulations, you two. Adam, come meet your baby sister."

Adam walked over and stared at Lily. They knew that he was going to be an excellent big brother. When Lily was finally asleep, Luna thought it was best that she had a nap as well. Luna lay on the bed in the nursery as her baby slept. Hunter walked in and saw the two of them sleeping. They both looked so peaceful, and he did not want to disturb them. For a moment, he could not believe how lucky he was. He had another chance at a family. He was so incredibly thankful for that. Nothing was more important to him than family.

The months passed, and slowly but surely, Hunter and Luna adjusted to having a newborn around. Their lifestyles slightly changed, but they also had so much joy. Adam was still in good health, and he greatly enjoyed being a big brother.

One day, Luna looked at the calendar and realized that her and Hunter's wedding was in three weeks. Everything was in order, thank goodness, and she had even been able to get her measurements for her wedding dress. She was starting to feel like herself again, and she felt as though she had her sexiness back. She felt good in her body, and she could not wait for Hunter to see her walk down the aisle.

A week before the wedding, Luna's sister and mother landed in the city. She was happy to have her family in from Guatemala. They were all excited for the wedding. They knew how much work Luna had put into planning it, and it was said to be the wedding of the century. Plus, it would be nice to have her sister and mother help with the baby. Hunter had been training more as of late, and she was going to need all of the help she could get.

"Lily, that is such a beautiful name," Lisa said to her sister. "Are you excited for the big day? In a way, it is kind of like you two are married already. This wedding will just be a celebration of that."

Luna agreed with her sister, and when the time came a week later for their wedding, Luna was the most beautiful bride. She stood looking at herself in her wedding dress. She became startled when she noticed Hunter walk into the room.

"I thought that it was bad luck to see the bride before the wedding?" she teased her soon-to-be husband.

Hunter laughed.

"Oh, baby," he started to say to her. "I think we both had all the bad luck we could have already."

Hunter walked over to his soon-to-be wife. He took her hands as he looked deeply into her eyes. He could not believe how far they had come together. They had been through so much already, and with each other, they knew that everything was possible. Hunter leaned down and gently kissed Luna. She embraced him. All felt right in the world, and what made it all better was that her mother and sister were there as well to celebrate this special day.

"Are you ready for this?" Hunter asked Luna. "Are you ready to become husband and wife?"

“Let’s do this,” she said with love in her heart to Hunter. “I knew that you were the one for me the first night that we met.”

It was time for Luna and Hunter to become husband and wife. Luna had her mother walk her down the aisle. It was a special moment for all of them. When the time came, her mother happily gave her hand to Hunter. Adam was the cutest ring bearer that one had ever seen. The decorations for the wedding were lavish and beautiful. This was the wedding that Luna had always imagined. Hunter could not believe how beautiful she was as she walked down the aisle to meet him.

When they were finished exchanging their vows, Hunter and Luna embraced each other. They kissed and were excited to expand their journey as husband and wife. The couple was officially married. Neither of them could believe their luck.

After exchanging vows, the real party began. They ate and danced with all of their friends and family. Luna looked around at everyone who attended their wedding.

She saw her mother holding her daughter, Lily. She saw Ella dancing with Adam and Lisa. She saw Frank with other members of the team, congratulating Hunter.

Everyone looked so happy for them. Luna’s heart was so full. She had always dreamed of having a family. She could not believe her luck. She went from living paycheck to paycheck as a nanny to marrying the love of her life. Hunter treated her so well, and she felt so fulfilled in life. She watched as Hunter walked over to her. He was all smiles.

“We did it!” he exclaimed. “We did it! We are officially married, my darling.”

Luna smiled at her husband.

“We did it,” she repeated to him. “We did it, my love. We are officially a family.”

THE END.