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A Wife and Mother sample
NOT FOR SALE

A WIFE AND MOTHER

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A Wife and Mother
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Chapter One

It was a beautiful summer's day. Rhonda and Libby were sitting on a park bench watching the children play.

"Who are those children Anders and Rebecca are playing with?" asked Rhonda.

"The girl is Marcia," answered Libby. "She's in the same class as Rebecca at school. I don't know the name of the little boy. I've seen him with his father when he picks Marcia up from school. I guess he hasn't started school yet. So he must be younger than Anders."

"They're very young to be here alone," said Rhonda.

"They're not alone. That's their father standing near the swings. He's making sure the little boy doesn't fall off."

Rhonda stared at the tall red-haired man. "He keeps looking at you," she laughed. "I think he likes you!"

Libby pulled her sunhat down over her face. "He can look if he wants," she said. "I'm very happy with my husband, thank you! I don't need another man in my life!"

Rhonda sighed. She looked at Libby. Her blonde hair was long and shiny. She was wearing a pink T-shirt and straight blue jeans.

She's beautiful, she thought. She's so tall and elegant, and she's such a nice person. My brother Kris was lucky to marry her. I'm short and dark and a bit overweight. No man in the park would look at me.

Libby heard Rhonda sigh. She turned to her sister-in-law and patted her hand. "Are you OK?" she asked. "You have had such a hard time."

"Some days are harder than others," said Rhonda. "But I feel much better staying with you and Kris. You are so kind to let me stay with you for a few days. I couldn't have come to the music festival if I had to stay in a hotel."

"I think it's terrible that you got no money from the divorce. I can't believe that Barton got all the money, the house and the car. It wasn't fair."

"No," said Rhonda. "It wasn't fair. Never marry a lawyer! They are too smart when it comes to their own divorces! He made sure that he got everything and I got nothing."

"Kris and I worry about you," said Libby softly.

"I know, but it's OK. I never worked after I got married. I was so busy playing the oboe in the amateur orchestra and being the perfect lawyer's wife. But I've started my little business buying handcrafts made by women in Afghanistan and selling them here in the US. It's slow, but I'm doing OK."

“Well, we love having you stay with us. The children love having you stay too. You must stay with us as long as you want.”

Rhonda smiled at Libby. “Thank you, but I’m fine. Salma is a lovely town, and I love to visit here. I’ll go back to Wilmington tomorrow. I have my little apartment, and I have a lot of work to do with my new business.”

They could hear Anders shouting, “Mom! Mom! Look what I can do!”

“Oh no!” laughed Libby. “He’s climbing up the slide the wrong way! Does he think he’s Superman?”

She jumped up, and hurried over to her son.

Rhonda sat and watched them. *Libby and Kris are so much in love. They have two beautiful children and a nice house. They are so lucky! The perfect marriage and the perfect family*, she thought. *What do I have? No husband, no children, a tiny apartment in a bad neighbourhood and a very old car.*

She wanted to cry but then she said to herself, *Think positive! You have a wonderful brother and sister-in-law. You have a great niece and nephew. You still have your music, and you won’t play well in the concert tonight if you are miserable!*

She forced herself to smile when Libby came back to the bench with Rebecca and Anders.

“Did you have a nice time with your friends?” she asked the children.

“Yes,” said Rebecca. “Marcia is in my class at school. She’s taller than me, but I can swing higher!”

“It’s time to go home,” said Libby. “Anders is getting tired, and Aunty Rhonda has to get ready for her concert tonight.”

They drove back to Kris and Libby’s house. It was a normal family home in a good neighbourhood. But it was nicer than other houses in the street.

The windows were so clean that they sparkled. The paintwork of the house was perfect, and the garden was special. At the front of the house Libby grew roses and azaleas. Behind the house was a large vegetable garden.

“How do you find enough time to look after Rebecca and Anders and have such a beautiful garden?” asked Rhonda.

“The garden is my hobby,” said Libby. “And I’m lucky. Kris earns enough money, so I don’t have to work. I can be a fulltime mother. And I can help out at the school too.”

“Doesn’t Kris help you in the house and garden?”

Libby laughed. "He is not very good at work in the house. I don't think he knows how to use a paintbrush or a screwdriver. But it's OK. He is so busy with his students at the high school. And he is a wonderful husband and father."

The inside of the house was special too. Libby bought old furniture and repaired it. She made curtains and cushions and patchwork quilts. Everything was so clean and bright. It was the perfect family home.

She is so talented, thought Rhonda. I love this house.

Libby made a meal for the children. "Go and get ready for your concert," she said to Rhonda. "I'm so sorry. I want to come and hear you play. But Kris is away with the high school band and we don't like to use babysitters."

"It's OK," said Rhonda. "The event managers will make a video of the concert. You and Kris can watch that."

When Rhonda came back to the kitchen dressed in her long black dress for the concert, Libby was talking to Kris on the phone. She was smiling. "Yes, everything is OK here. The children have eaten, and Rhonda will leave for her concert soon," she said.

"How is Augusta?"

"Is the band doing well in the competition?"

"They are through to the semi-finals! That's wonderful!"

"No. I'm not going to Rhonda's concert, but we can watch the video together when you come home. We love having her here. I wish she could stay, but she says she must go back to Wilmington tomorrow.

"We miss you. We'll see you on Wednesday. I love you!"

Libby hung up and turned to Rhonda. "I hate it when Kris is away. I miss him so much!"

She pointed to the table. "I know you don't like to eat too much before a concert. So I made some sandwiches."

Rhonda looked at the table. There was a plate of small sandwiches, and a jug of iced tea.

"That's perfect," she said.

Libby smiled. "I'll have some more food ready for you when you come back from the concert. I'm sure you'll be hungry then."

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