

A MIDWIFE'S DECEPTION

Written by

Vicky L. Neal

FADE IN:

EXT. HOSPITAL - DAY

A modern facility in a big city.

INT. HOSPITAL - DR. BARRETT'S OFFICE - DAY - SAME

CAROL THATCHER (29), down-to-earth in her casual attire, sits next to her husband ROGER THATCHER (34), serious and reclusive. Both stare straight ahead in stunned silence at...

DR. BARRETT (50s). Seated behind his desk with his hands folded on top, he looks very glum.

ROGER

You're sure?

DR. BARRETT

Afraid so. Time has run out for a heart transplant.

Carol struggles to speak.

CAROL

How long?

DR. BARRETT

A few hours, maybe less. I'm very sorry.

In a daze-like state, Carol slowly gets to her feet and schlepps out of the office. Roger locks eyes with the doctor for a moment before he slowly rises and exits the room.

INT. HOSPITAL - NICU - DAY

A couple of NURSES tend to the few critically ill BABIES in incubators. Heart monitors beep quietly.

Carol steps inside and pauses to look at her 3-week-old BABY BOY. His heart monitor shows he barely clings to life. Carol struggles to swallow as she drifts closer.

Nurse #1 takes notice and goes to Carol.

NURSE #1

My deepest sympathies, Carol.

Carol ignores her as she stares at her little one near death.

NURSE #1

Carol?

Still no reaction. Nurse #1 looks back at her companion, who wears the same puzzled look.

Carol starts to open the incubator. Nurse #1 stops her.

NURSE #1
What are you doing?

Carol gives Nurse #1 a strong look.

CAROL
I need to hold him one last time.

NURSE #1
You know that's against protocol.

CAROL
Screw protocol.

Nurse #1 softens with a nod and steps back.

Carol proceeds to open the incubator. Using her nurse's training, Carol disconnects her baby boy from the equipment, wraps him in his blanket, and lifts him out. She cuddles the infant as she sits down in a chair. Even hums a lullaby.

The baby grows completely still. Carol sobs quietly. She rests her head against her son's.

EXT. ANDERSON HOUSE - DAY - TWO YEARS LATER

A beautiful upper middle-class home in suburbia. The lengthy driveway is packed with cars. The sound of an energetic gathering carries to the outside.

KATIE (O.S.)
I can't believe you're leaving us.

INT. ANDERSON HOUSE - FAMILY ROOM - DAY - SAME

The room is open to the kitchen. A couple dozen GUESTS mingle while snacking on a display of food on the long counter. A banner hangs from wall to wall - "Good luck, Jennifer".

JENNIFER ANDERSON (18) speaks with KATIE (54). Jennifer's mom ABBIGAIL (ABBY) ANDERSON (49) stands with them.

JENNIFER
Are you kidding? I'll be racing out of here like a track star.

Abby pulls Jennifer close, their faces pressed together.

ABBY
My little girl. Maybe you could
skip college for a few years.

Abby's other daughter VICTORIA (VICKI) MYERS (26) walks up to
them. Jennifer spots her big sister.

JENNIFER
Help.

Vicki tries to pry Jennifer out of Abby's grip. She refuses
to release her.

VICKI
Let go, Mom.

Abby reluctantly loosens her grip on Jennifer.

VICKI
(to Jennifer)
Brad was looking for you out back.

JENNIFER
Oh my god!

Jennifer rushes to the rear deck. Abby watches anxiously.

ABBY
I thought she'd want to spend every
moment with me before she leaves.

VICKI
I know how hard this is for you,
but let her go.

ABBY
I don't think I can.

Vicki's two children, PETER (5) and MADISON (3), run past,
giggling as the younger sibling chases after her big brother.

VICKI
If you need something to occupy
your time, you're more than welcome
to babysit your grandkids.

Vicki hurries after the little ones. Katie lays a hand on
Abby's shoulder.

KATIE
She's right, Sis. You've done your
job as a mom. Your new full-time
role is of grandma.

ABBY
How did this happen?

Katie grins at Abby. STEVEN ANDERSON (52) joins them with two alcoholic drinks in his hands.

KATIE
Your ex is suffering from pre
empty nest syndrome.

Katie goes off to find her own drink. Steven holds out a glass to Abby. She hesitates.

STEVEN
It'll take the edge off.

Abby accepts the glass. They sip.

ABBY
Quitting my job after I got
pregnant with Vicki was an easy
choice. All those years, I was Mom,
Nurse, Therapist, Coach, Scout
Mother, and Chauffeur. Now I'm
nothing.

STEVEN
You're still Mom for another...

Steve glances at his watch.

STEVE
11 hours and 13 minutes.

Abby's lips tighten. She might cry.

STEVEN
I'm kidding.

Steven sets both drinks aside and takes Abby into his arms.

STEVEN
We did our job, and very well I
might add. Jennifer has to learn to
fly, just like Vicki did.

ABBY
What am I going to do with myself
in this big empty house?

Steven looks down into Abby's face with lust-filled eyes.

CUT TO:

INT. ANDERSON HOUSE - MAIN BEDROOM - NIGHT

Kissing passionately, Steven and Abby enter. Steven goes to close the door and does so a little harder than he intended. That worries Abby.

ABBY

Shhh. Jennifer might hear.

Abby locks the door.

STEVEN

I really don't care.

They return to their kissing. Clothes start to come off.

LATER

Steven and Abby cuddle in bed after their escapade.

ABBY

We should really stop doing this.

STEVEN

Why? Just because we're divorced doesn't mean we can't still enjoy each other.

ABBY

Divorce usually does mean that.

Steven turns his head to look into Abby's face.

STEVEN

Are you serious?

ABBY

No, I don't know. It's just a very confusing time for me.

STEVEN

You'll be fine, honey. Pick up a new hobby. Spend more time with Madison and Peter. I'm sure they'd love that.

ABBY

Do you ever wish we'd had more kids?

Steven takes a long moment to think.