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Your ESSENCE

Volume 2



YourEssence - Quarreling Lovers, Volume 2 - Chapter 2

"'David,' I don't want to be you anymore."

"You said that already. I heard you," Diana barked back at her 'husband' who had just dropped this bomb on her. She had been shocked into silence by the words the first time. Now, hearing them again, she was starting to feel angry.

"Well, you weren't responding. I didn't know if you heard me," David's response was curt.

"I did, and I'm just trying to figure out why you would say a thing like that to me," Diana said sharply in response. Her words clearly developed an edge that was meant to injure.

"Seriously? After what I went through in the last 48 hours? You are wondering why I would feel this way?"

"Yes, David. I am. Do you think I have had it easy myself? No, but I am not ready to go back on our agreement so quickly."

"Why not? Things are just... easier as our original selves."

"Not for both of us. You didn't have your parents visit and turn your brain into mush. I barely even remember my former life. You'd condemn me to the same fate you are trying to escape!"

"That's ridiculous. I've tried to be nice. I've tried to be understanding. I have... tried. Now, I'm tired," David's words were becoming increasingly forceful, and his posturing was becoming more dominant. Diana felt his imposing presence and began to back up. "You must have been a closeted transwoman. I never picked up the signs. I wish you would have just been straight with me about it."

"Straight with you? You have access to my memories! Do you remember me going around wearing

dresses and wishing for a different life?" Diana was incredulous at the insinuation.

"No, but I don't believe being around my mother would somehow turn you into me."

"You were there! You saw what happened. I fucking learned another language in a matter of minutes, David!"

"Yeah, I was there, and I saw you lean in. You were all into the girly stuff. You went and got your nails and hair done with Olivia! I never would have done that. So, connect the dots, Diana. You wanted this. My mother had nothing to do with it," David's voice quivered as he spoke in frustration and anger. He could barely get his thoughts out. He was so overwhelmed that he was finding it hard to control himself.

"You never would have called your mother by her name if you weren't experiencing the memory bleeding effect yourself! So, you might want to turn the mirror on yourself, David. You're not as perfect nor immune as you might imagine. So suck it up and be a man!" Diana barked her reply and posed confidently with her arms crossed across her chest as she concluded. She was visibly contented by her response and that, based on David's slip-up, she now had the upper hand in their fight.

David looked shocked in response. His face looked hurt, and Diana's stance softened as she saw David begin to tear up. "David, I'm sorry. I shouldn't have said that." It was too late; David turned and retreated to the second bedroom. He was visibly sobbing as he turned to escape, and Diana's heart broke a little seeing him like this. The door slammed shut, and Diana could hear David audibly cursing and causing a stir in the room. Diana tried to open the door, but David had locked it.

"David, come on. Open the door. I'm sorry for what I said. I was upset and wasn't thinking straight."

"Screw you, Diana! Go away!"

"We can't sort this out if you stay locked in there. Please, David. Let's let calmer heads prevail."

"No! Leave me alone!" David's words were forceful in a way that Diana had never heard him be before. It scared her.

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David finally sat down on the floor in the room, placing his elbows on his knees and hands on his face. There was no bed in the room yet, although the idea had been that there would eventually be a crib. The thought of having a child made his stomach churn and his head pound as he thought through all the recent events that had happened to him.

"Well, that's never happening..." David's thoughts turned against their joint vision of the future they had both settled into. They had never explicitly agreed, but they both knew that's what they were setting the foundation for. So much so it felt like a foregone conclusion, so they didn't need to discuss it further when Diana had come clean and admitted her desires. David knew it was what was driving Diana on a base instinctive level. He knew because he was feeling the start of those feelings but wasn't willing to acknowledge it consciously. Being immersed in extremely masculine events in the last twenty-four hours had brought it into focus for David.

From the flirtatious woman to the adrenaline rush of the home intruder, David's mind was overcome with urges he had never experienced before. He felt a need to assert himself. To make himself dominant. He felt rage and aggression. He felt a desire to push boundaries. He felt out of control but also like he was finally taking control of his life. It sharply contrasted the way 'she' had felt as Diana. That contrast drew David's attention to his memories of wanting to become a mother. At the moment, that feeling felt as alien as seeing little green men land in a UFO. As David continued to reflect, that feeling softened.

Rather than rejecting motherhood, David felt resentment instead. "Why do I feel like this?" David's thoughts were fraught. His body felt like pent-up energy, wanting to escape. To take action. To do something. He pounded his fists against the floor to try and work out some of the energy, but all it did was disturb the neighbors.

This resentment refined and became focused on a new target as he heard his neighbors yelling to stop the noise. A stray thought entered his mind and grew, "Why wouldn't she take her original pill? When she didn't revert fully, she wouldn't take 'David' pills. That shouldn't have been such a big problem." With that, a plan emerged. David would get revenge on Diana for putting him through this turmoil.

David was already gone in the morning when Diana tried to offer him a cup of coffee. She had made it how he liked it, anticipating a difficult but essential conversation. Diana was a little heartbroken to see that David had left without saying anything. Their dreams and plans seemed to be crumbling before her eyes.

Diana's texts to David went unanswered. He didn't respond to phone calls either. Diana would have worried that David was missing if it weren't for their shared family account showing their mutual locations. Seeing he was at their old apartment gave her some relief, but her feelings were thoroughly hurt.

Meanwhile, David had gone over two days without taking his YourEssence. His body had regressed some back to its original form, but he was now also experiencing the lingering effects of the pills. He stood before his mirror, holding a handful of YourEssence pills. He placed them down on the counter and picked up a single pill. "For science," was all he said as he downed the pill.

A week went by with no contact. Diana had cried herself to sleep every night since David had disappeared. Diana was just returning from work when she had the scare of her life. Sitting in her apartment living room was an identical clone of herself.

"Holy fucking Hell, David! What the fuck are you doing here looking like that?" Diana screamed in shock.

"I could say the same thing of you, 'David.' As you can see, there is no problem with taking your former YourEssence pills after you start showing signs of partial reversibility. That's what it's called, by the way—the condition we both have where we don't fully turn back into ourselves. Using someone else's YourEssence causes partial reversibility disruptions or PRD for short. Would you like to guess what the cure is?"

Diana's face was stunned with shock. She remained quiet as the original Diana spoke.

"That's right! It's your original YourEssence! Just another reason we are permanent customers of UniGlobal's now."

With that, Diana broke down crying and fell to her knees. Diana (Diana Prime) stood over her husband. "Are you ready to tell me the truth now, 'David?'" Diana remained on the floor sobbing, and the question only agitated the situation. So, despite her initial bluster, Diana' relented and helped Diana to her feet. The pair of women sat down at the small dining table, and Diana' started, "Why did you lie to me?"

"I don't think I lied. Maybe I was confused, but I read that it could be dangerous."

"Really? That's the truth?"

"Yes! I swear," Diana lied.

"Uh-huh. Where did you read that?"

"Probably the same places you looked. The dark web, forums, things like that."

"They were all saying the same thing?"

"Well, when I looked, yeah."

"So, your position would be that the whole internet's opinion on this has changed in a few weeks?"

"Uhhh, maybe. I don't know. What did you see when you looked?"

"Not a single thing. There was no mention of any risk at all. Why would there be? We were already taking each other's pills. That was way riskier than taking your own. So, I'll give you one last chance, Diana. Why are you lying to me?"

Diana's tears returned. She was incapable of speaking from the force of her sobs.

"Diana! Tell me!" Diana' yelled, leaning forward over the table to get right in Diana's face.

"I don't want to be a man!" she shouted back through a brief break before the tears returned.

Diana' rocked back in her chair from their sudden outburst and was in shock.

"You don't? Since when?" Diana' asked

"Since about six weeks ago when we had sex."

"The sex was that good?"

"No, don't be ridiculous. Something else changed."

"What?"

"I... I was pregnant."

"What? Oh my God!" Diana' was utterly shocked. She could barely believe what she was hearing. As she processed the statement, something grasped her attention, "Hang on, was?"

"I found out after the fact. I never took a test or even knew I was pregnant. It was over before I even knew, but the tests confirmed it."

"Oh, Diana, baby. I'm so sorry."

The two women embraced, and Diana cried into her clone's shoulder. Soon, Diana' joined in, and they both wept in each other's arms. After several minutes, Diana' continued her investigation.

"Why did that make you want to be a woman, though? I would think it would scare you off for good."

"It should have, I think I wanted it to. But it didn't happen. I just kept finding more reasons why I wanted it to be true again. I wanted to have your baby, well, David's baby."

"I see..."

"When I was around Olivia, we just clicked in a way I had never experienced. It made me feel things I'd never even known I could feel. It was euphoric. The idea of becoming a mother on top of that is like an endorphin rush. I can hardly help but think about it; I just get so excited. So when you suggested we return to our original selves, I panicked."

"I'll say..."

"I'm so sorry. I never should have lied. Can you forgive me?"

Diana' remained leaning back in her chair as Diana tried to reach out for her partner's hand. Diana' pulled her hand back, unwilling to reciprocate.

"I can't..." Diana' responded.

"What do you mean? You can't? Or you won't?"

"For now, I can't. Things are too messed up."

"Well, tell me about it! What's going on? Why did you change back to your original self? I thought you liked being David."

"You know, I thought so too. Then, I hit a guy with a bat and ended up killing him."

Diana gasped at her clone's curt response, but Diana' continued, "And I wanted to fuck another woman. Not even someone I knew, just some stranger that I literally bumped into."

Diana's tears returned. "Why are you saying these awful things?"

"Because they are true, and I'm tired of hiding what these pills are doing to me. What they did to you!"

"But, we wanted to gain a better understanding of each other. You were the one who insisted!"

"Yeah, well, maybe I don't like who I became anymore."

"What? What are you saying?"

"I saying, I don't know how I feel about you anymore, 'David.'"

With that last bombshell, Diana' stood up and walked to the apartment door.

"Wait! You can't just leave! Are you going to change back to David?"

"No... You are..." Diana' said as she dropped the bottle of David's YourEssence on the floor and closed the door behind her.