The Heart Shaped Box part 2

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The second piece of my story; read the first part!

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The boney man sat in his chair, trying to ease the pain in his legs from standing at the window for such a long amount of time. As the sun peaked over the hills of an orchard that sat right before his vineyard, he closed his eyes, and went to sleep.

Isaac didnâ t sleep at all that night. After the long talk with his mentor, the words echoed throughout his head, causing him to mouth certain phrases that stood out. They shared a strong bond for many years. Hugh had taught Isaac countless lessons; each and every one of them still within his young mind. Hugh had experienced early success, which usually caused students to become eager to learn how he did what he did. He didnâ t do much surprisingly. He inherited a profitable Vineyard from his parents and now exports an expensive wine that gives him more than enough currency to retire.

Thatâ s why Isaac admired him so much. He just wanted to be successful. So it is more than usual for a young man such as him to be plagued by the long conversation they shared earlier. The news of his death, the dispute between trust and greed, and the brief and vague conversation about the delivery. The item inside of the heart shaped box.

He stiffly travelled down the stairs and out onto a small deck that occupied a group of chairs, a small glass table, and a hammock filled with autumn leaves. Beyond the deck rested a soft bed of flowers that assumed the identity of beauty and long life. He stared at their colors as he kept his full attention on the topics covered earlier. Perhaps the only way to become accustomed with such unexpected news is to think about it until the interest for the current thought expires. He was an explorer, in reference to his thoughts. Like his mentor, he would mentally dissect a subject until it relegated to a more fundamental part of his mind. But it all started to make sense as he calmed down and began the process of accepting it. Greed does overpower trust; peopleâ s lives have to end at some point; and a delivery would have to be made sometime within the next 7 days. All problems seemingly solved.

Isaac hesitated to pull out a cigarette, as it had become a habit. A repetitive wind blew back and forth, keeping silence from his ears. At a moment of the winds absence, he could hear the sound of heels clicking behind him. They marched over pearl tiles that were put in several years ago to complement the pearl table tops and cabinets.

â Isaac,â she spoke with an irritated expression on her face and distasteful tone in her voice.

He turned to his fiance, putting the cigarette back into his pocket.

â Whatâ s wrong?â

She hesitated to step out onto the deck in fear that her thin white heels would slip through the creases of the wooden floor.

â Do you know what time it is?â She said with her arms beside her slim white dress that outlined the visible curves of her body.

He smiled and looked back at the flowers with his eyes squinted at the sun.

â I would come out here and water the plants every morning. Everyone in the estate would still be asleep as they are now. I remember having brief but enjoyable conversations with the gardener from next door. I recall

one day especially,â he continued to speak as his fiance's face grew sour, â I asked him about his schedule, you know, trying to find a possible time to go out for drinks. He said that he started at 8:15 in the morning, and got off at 6:00 at night.â

â Honey stop, what are you going on about?â

â He just walked by. So to answer your question, itâ s 8:15.â

She bit her lip and tilted her head slightly, still keeping the sour look she had since he began talking.

â Why didnâ t you come home last night? And please, donâ t give me a long, drawn out story.â

â Should I be direct, or do you want to sit down?â

â Out with it.â

He grinned, opposite to her face.

â Hugh is, dying. We were up all night just talking.â

The sour look on her face expired, it was now empathetic and caring.

â I-I donâ t know what to say. Iâ m so sorry, I really am.â

â Could you imagine how I felt when he told me? Iâ m still not comfortable with it. Not that I ever will be.â

â I wouldnâ t expect you to be,â she replied as she took off her heels and stepped out of the kitchen, â so, it took six,â she checked her watch, â almost seven hours just to talk about that?â

â No certainly not,â he said as he pulled her closer to him.

â Well then what did you two talk about?â

â His lips to my ears. Thatâ s how itâ s always been.â

â Why did I even ask,â she smiled, â but seriously, please come home tonight. Sleeping alone is depressing.â

He placed his lips on her forehead and brushed her brunette hair with his fingers.

â Iâ ll be there.â

She gave him one last look until sheâ d see him later. He turned back to the flowers and inevitably inhaled the smoke from the cigarette that he had pocketed earlier. The poison entered his lungs, easing his thoughts and relaxing his soul.

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A short 144 hours passed since the news of Hughâ s death. On mornings before conversing with the gardener from next door and before even getting to the estate, Isaac would call Hugh to wake him up.

â Hello?â

â What time is it?â His voice would sound very ancient and accustomed to sleep.

â A quarter to 6.â

â Why are you calling son, is everything alright?â

â Iâ m fine Mr. Davenport, thanks. I just thought itâ d be nice for you to wake up every morning and watch the sun rise,â Isaac insisted.

The blankets uncovered his body, evident by the distracting noise over the phone.

â Itâ s your first week as my assistant and youâ re already giving me orders?â He laughed.

â No no, just a suggestion sir. I apologize, feel free to go back to sleep.â

â Ease up Mr. Moreau, Iâ ll go on with your suggestion. Itâ s not like I have anything better to do at this time but sleep, and Iâ ll do plenty of that when Iâ m dead.â

â I wonâ t agree with that statement,â he chuckled, â but good. Expect this phone call every morning then.â

â Very well. But can I ask you a question son?â

â Of course.â

â Why do you wake up and watch the sun rise?â

Isaac paused and tucked his right arm under his left elbow.
â With all do respect sir, I keep that to myself.â

â Why is that?â

â Itâ s a weird reason. Youâ d probably think it immature for my age.â

â Nonsense. Out with it,â Hugh demanded politely.

Isaac sighed briefly.

â Well itâ s a beautiful thing, to watch the sun rise,â he explained, â itâ s one of those things that we take for granted.â

Hugh stayed silent for a few seconds then let out a deep breath.

â Thatâ s interesting I must say.â

â I know it isnâ t a secret, but Iâ d appreciate it if you kept that between you and myself.â

â Be calm,â he said jokingly, â you lips to my ears. I assure you that anything we talk about stays between us. I expect the same behavior from you.â

â Of course.â

â Very good. See you soon then.â

â Goodbye Mr. Davenport.â

But that conversation, that routine call every morning, that small bonding process, it all was a distant memory. Isaac layed in bed purposely not turning his head to see the time. He knew that he could prevent the clock from reminding him of those morning conversations, but the rising of the sun would fluster his brain further. There was no knowledge of his whereabouts; Hugh could be lying in bed, but just as well be lying in a coffin. There are some things that for a short time are better off not knowing. We seek comfort from the fact that we donâ t know or are unsure of something. We tell ourselves, â it could be bad,â leaving room for our hopes and aspirations.

Isaac sat up in his bed interrupted by a thought. He remembered the conversation that he and Hugh had a short 6 days ago. The lesson that he learned was irrelevant. He only concentrated on the delivery; on the item inside of the heart shaped box. He decided hastily, as quickly as the thought came to mind, to call the estate and find out if the box was on the pedestal in Hughâ s office. Isaac knew for obvious reasons that if the box was there, Hugh wouldnâ t be. His phone sat idle on a desk next to his bed, a desk where he usually kept notes about lessons that he learned in the past. He picked up his phone and noticed the time.

â Jenny should be there,â he said to himself as he dialed numbers, â hello?â

He waited momentarily as the phone rung several times.

â Hey Isaac, whatâ s up?â

â Nothing, listen Jenny, can you do me a favor?â

He knew that she would, which made his question pointless. Jenny currently works as a maid at Hughâ s estate: new, young, beautiful, and very much in Isaacâ s debt after he burdened Hugh until he agreed to give her the job.

â Yeah sure, what is it?â She asked.

â Take my keys from behind the front desk. Go upstairs and unlock Hughâ s door, then call me back.â

â Hold on, why am I going in there? Iâ m not even allowed to go on that floor.â

â Jenny itâ ll be quick, just do it.â

â What if someone sees-â

â No one will see you,â he interrupted, â at this time, you and I should be the only ones there.â

â Fine fine. Call you back after I unlock it, or what?â

â Yes, just call me back. Iâ m gonna shower then be on my way.â

â Alright bye.â

â Bye,â Isaac concluded.

The young confused maid rushed in to the main room as she asked herself about the nobility of what she was about to do. Her hands slid into a tight spot between the front desk and a wall. The space was just shallow enough for her lanky wrist, which caused her to wonder how Isaac ever put the keys there in the first place. She swiped it from the secure spot and ran up the stairs. Her eyes scanned every area from one wall to the other.

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