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Parkbench Power Exchange

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Parkbench Power Exchange

Jeriann Watkins

The woman on the park bench is exhausted. Her hair is unbrushed and her head hangs, hiding in the hood of the sweatshirt that conceals the rest of her figure. She's been sitting for hours, hardly moving, barely distinguishable from the bench she occupies. Several people walk by and consider sitting down, but move on to other benches. Something about her aura pushes them away. It is obvious that the other half of the bench is being saved for someone. Whether this person is tangible or just the ghost of a memory is unclear.

A man, casually dressed, stands by a nearby tree. He watches the woman for a good ten minutes before approaching. He sits like he belongs there, and suddenly, he does. He is the one she's been waiting for.

"You're early," she says without looking at him.

"You've been here for a while," he counters.

The woman does not reply. She simply sits, expressionless. His presence does not change anything in her demeanor. Indeed, it appears that as far as she is concerned, he has been there the whole time, occupying the other half of the bench. Perhaps his haunting presence in her mind is what preserved his seat all this time.

"Well? How are we going to do this?" The man looks around impatiently, obviously not content to spend all day in the public park.

"Are you still seeing her?"

"Tanya." He sighs, not wanting to put up with her questions.

"No. This is not about me. You had time to talk about me. Now it's about her." She straightens up, demanding a response.

"Yes. We're still together. But you don't know anything about it. You can't understand."

"Well then, there's not much to do. You can get your stuff out of the house or I can give it to Goodwill. You decide.

Let me know when you'll be around. I'll need your keys as well. Please have enough respect not to use them. Just because you can get in, does not mean you belong in my house."

Tanya stands, resolved, and walks away without looking back. She has not once looked at him, but seems to have his face seared into her mind.

The man remains on the bench, looking confused. He had not expected to lose the upper hand so quickly. As it dawns on him that he had never had it, he starts to slouch into the bench. People walk by, some sitting down on the bench, some standing nearby, no one concerned about the man occupying the seat. It is obvious he is alone, waiting for no one.