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Marianne, a statuesque woman with a mane of chestnut hair and piercing blue eyes, strode into the living room. At 44, she carried an air of elegance and poise that seemed to defy time. She was once the toast of the town, a successful photo model whose beauty had been captured in countless glossy magazines. Her life had been a whirlwind of glamour and passionate romances, leaving a trail of broken hearts in her wake. But all of that was behind her now. She had settled into a quieter life, a life of motherhood and reflection.

Her adopted son, Marlon, had just returned from military service, and his youthful energy filled the house once more. At 20, he was tall and lean, with a shyness that belied the strength he had developed during his time in the service. Marianne felt a peculiar mix of pride and protectiveness towards him. She had watched him grow from a timid child into a young man, and she knew the trials and tribulations that awaited him as he navigated the complexities of adulthood.

Marlon had made two wishes that Marianne had promised to fulfill. The first was a trip to the safari park. His sister, a bubbly teenager named Elise, squealed with excitement when she heard the news. Marianne couldn't help but feel a twinge of amusement at the idea of Marlon's innocent fascination with the wild animals. It was a stark contrast to the hidden desires she had discovered in his room. She decided to keep her findings to herself, understanding that it was a phase, a natural part of his growing up.

The day of the safari arrived, and Marianne packed a picnic basket with Marlon's favorite snacks. They piled into the car with Elise, her eyes glued to her phone, and set off on the long drive. The anticipation grew as they approached the park gates, and Marianne felt a strange sense of excitement mingled with the weight of her recent revelation. As they drove through the open savannah, Marlon's eyes widened at the sight of giraffes stretching their long necks to nibble at the leaves of acacia trees.

Suddenly, the car jolted to a halt. "I really have to go to the bathroom," Elise announced, her voice edged with urgency. Marianne sighed and pulled over, scanning the horizon for a suitable spot. The bad news: the car was suddenly surrounded by a pride of lions, their golden coats blending with the tall grass. They stared at the vehicle with curiosity, their tails swishing lazily. "Please not now," Marianne begged to her, trying to keep her voice steady.

Marlon's eyes grew wide with a mix of terror and fascination as he watched the majestic creatures. Marianne's mind raced, trying to think of a solution. She grabbed the empty jerrycan from the trunk, her hand trembling slightly. "Please, piss in this,"

she said to Elise, trying to keep the fear out of her voice. The situation was absurd and she couldn't help but feel a strange sense of amusement amidst the tension.

Elise looked at her mother, aghast. "What? Here?" she whispered. Marianne nodded firmly. "We can't risk getting out of the car. It's empty, but it will smell like petrol. It's the best we can do." She handed the can to Elise, her gaze never leaving the lions that continued to observe them with curious eyes.

Elise reluctantly took the jerrycan, her cheeks flushing as she realized the gravity of the situation. She tried to ignore the thumping of her heart and the dryness in her mouth as she began to relieve herself, the sound of her urine echoing in the quiet car. Marianne watched the lions, their expressions unreadable. She knew that the scent of fear could be as tempting to them as the smell of prey, so she forced herself to remain calm. Marlon sat frozen, his eyes flicking between the lions and his sister, unsure of how to react to the absurdity of the moment.

As Elise finished and sealed the can, Marianne took a deep breath. She turned the key in the ignition, whispering a prayer that the engine wouldn't startle the predators. The car rumbled to life, and she inched it forward, the wheels crunching on the gravel. The lions didn't move, but their eyes followed the car as it slowly retreated. Marianne felt a bead of sweat trickle down her spine as she maintained eye contact with the largest lioness, her heart pounding in her chest. She had faced many challenges in her life, but nothing quite like this.

When they were at a safe distance, Marianne pulled over again, allowing Elise to complete her business in privacy. She couldn't help but chuckle at the absurdity of the situation, and Marlon finally cracked a smile. "Well, that was... different," he murmured, his voice shaky with relief. Marianne patted his shoulder, her own laughter bubbling up. "Life is full of surprises, isn't it?" she said, her voice light despite the tension that still hung in the air.

As they continued their safari adventure, the trio stumbled upon an unexpected scene: a mob of angry kangaroos. The animals had been startled by the car's earlier abrupt stop and were now gathered around a watering hole, their powerful legs kicking up dust as they hopped in agitation. Marianne's laughter subsided, and she felt a fresh wave of anxiety wash over her. These creatures were notorious for their unpredictable temperaments.

Marlon leaned out of the window, his eyes gleaming with excitement. "Mom, can we get closer?" His voice was a mix of wonder and adrenaline. Marianne gripped the steering wheel tightly, weighing the risk against her son's desire for a closer look. "Just a little," she cautioned, inching the car forward. The kangaroos' muscular forms tensed, their eyes fixed on the intruder.

Marianne felt a strange kinship with the creatures. Like her, they had been forced into a world that didn't always make sense, a world where the powerful and the innocent could find themselves at odds. But unlike Marianne, they had the luxury of living without the burden of secrets. She couldn't help but think of the photos hidden under Marlon's bed as the car rolled closer to the hopping mob.

The kangaroos grew more restless as the car approached, their powerful legs ready to propel them away from the perceived danger. Marianne's instincts screamed at her to retreat, but she knew that backing down would only make things worse. Instead, she slowly rolled down her window, her hand hovering over the horn. The air was thick with the scent of fear and the musky odor of the animals.

"Marlon, keep the camera ready," she whispered, her eyes never leaving the mob. He nodded, his camera poised. The kangaroos' movements grew more erratic, and Marianne could see the tension coiled in their bodies, ready to explode into a flurry of kicks and punches. They were a force to be reckoned with, even behind the safety of the car windows.

Marianne took a deep breath and gently honked the horn. The startled animals leaped into the air, their powerful legs launching them into a chaotic dance of fear and aggression. The dust they'd kicked up swirled around the car, briefly obscuring the view. Through the cloud, Marianne could make out the outlines of the animals, their eyes flashing with anger.

Marlon's camera clicked away, capturing the scene in a series of vivid snapshots. His heart raced with a mix of fear and exhilaration, the adrenaline coursing through his veins. This was a stark reminder of the raw power of nature, so different from the sanitized version he'd seen in documentaries.

The cloud of dust began to clear, revealing the kangaroos had dispersed slightly. Marianne eased the car forward again, her eyes locked on the alpha male. It was a dance of respect, a silent communication between her and the wild creature. She knew that any sudden move could provoke them, so she proceeded with caution, her hand still hovering over the horn.

As they approached the next part of the safari, Elise spotted a group of elephants in the distance. Their large, drooping ears and slow, heavy steps suggested a melancholic mood. The elephants were known to be highly emotional, and Marianne couldn't help but feel a pang of sadness at the sight. Their solemn procession seemed to mirror the weight of her own secrets.

Marlon was intrigued by the elephants' demeanor. He'd heard about their strong familial bonds and their capacity for empathy. "Why do you think they're so sad?" he

asked Marianne, his voice low and gentle. She sighed, looking away from the road for a brief moment to meet his gaze. "Sometimes, even animals can feel the pain of loss or the burden of captivity," she replied, her thoughts drifting to her own feelings of entrapment.

They sat in silence, watching the elephants for a while. Marianne felt a strange kinship with the creatures. Like them, she had been captured by circumstances beyond her control, her youthful spirit tamed and put on display. But unlike the elephants, she had the power to choose her path. With a soft touch, she placed her hand on Marlon's knee. "We all have our battles to fight, my love," she murmured, her eyes filling with a warmth that seemed to chase away the shadows of the past.

Marlon looked at her, his gaze searching hers. "What battles do you mean?" he asked, his voice tentative. Marianne took a deep breath, the words she'd been holding back for so long finally spilling forth. "When you were young, I didn't always make the right choices. But I've learned, Marlon. And I'll be here to help you make better ones."

The car lurched to a stop as a zebra, its black and white stripes stark against the dusty road, decided to claim its dominion. Its stubbornness was almost comical as it stared down the metal beast that dared to interrupt its journey.

Marlon leaned out the window, his camera forgotten as he stared at the animal in awe. "What do we do?" he asked, his voice filled with a mix of excitement and tension. Marianne's hand tightened on the steering wheel as she considered their options. The zebra's muscles rippled under its fur, and she knew that it could be just as unpredictable as the kangaroos had been.

Elise, ever the pragmatist, spoke up from the backseat. "We can't just sit here all day. Maybe if we honk the horn again, it'll move?" Marianne nodded, taking a deep breath. She gently tapped the horn, and the zebra's ears twitched, but it didn't budge. "Looks like he's not as easily swayed," she murmured, her eyes never leaving the animal's gaze.

Marlon watched, his heart racing. The zebra's eyes held a fierce determination, as if it were daring them to make the first move. Marianne leaned closer to the windshield, her eyes narrowing in thought. She knew that in the wild, animals had to fight for their territory, and this zebra was no different. It was a strange mirror to the silent battle of wills she faced with her own son, and she couldn't help but feel a strange respect for the creature's tenacity.

With a gentle touch, Marianne rolled down the window, allowing the warm breeze of the savanna to fill the car. She leaned out, her voice firm yet soothing. "C'mon,

buddy," she coaxed the zebra, her voice a soft melody that seemed to resonate with the very air around them. The animal's ears flickered, and it took a step closer, curiosity piqued by the unusual sound.

Marlon watched, his heart pounding in his chest. He had never seen his mother like this, so in tune with the wild. It was as if she were speaking a language that only the animals could understand. The zebra took another step, its muscles tensing, ready to flee or fight. Marianne's eyes never left the creature's, her voice a gentle whisper that seemed to soothe the very fabric of the animal's soul.

Elise leaned over the middle console, her eyes wide with amazement. "Marianne, what are you doing?" she breathed. Marianne shot her a sideways glance, a knowing smile playing on her lips. "Negotiating," she replied, her tone light despite the tension. The zebra took another step closer, its nostrils flaring as it scented the air, searching for signs of threat or peace.

Marlon felt the weight of his camera in his hands, the metal cool against his palms. He knew that this moment was something special, something that transcended the typical mother-son bond. He could almost see the years of Marianne's life flash before his eyes: her glamorous past, her quiet reflections, and now this strange, almost maternal interaction with a creature that could just as easily trample them as move aside.

With a sudden, cacophonous burst of sound and movement, the serene scene was shattered. A troop of monkeys, their eyes wild with some unknown panic, swarmed from the nearby trees, screeching and chattering. Marianne's smile vanished, replaced by a look of concern as the monkeys descended upon the zebra, their tiny fists and feet flailing with a ferocity that seemed almost human in its intensity.

The zebra, caught off-guard, snorted in surprise and bolted away from the car, its hooves thundering on the dry earth. The monkeys pursued it, their crazed laughter echoing through the air like the taunts of a twisted carnival. Marianne's hand shot to her mouth, her eyes wide with horror as she watched the surreal display unfold. It was as if the animals had switched places, the predators becoming the prey in an instant.

Marlon's eyes darted back to the car, where two monkeys had taken advantage of the distraction. They were perched on the hood, their tiny hands busy with their private parts, their faces contorted with expressions that seemed eerily human in their lust. Marianne stared at them, her cheeks flushing with a mix of embarrassment and fascination. She had seen a lot in her life, but this was certainly a new experience.

Elise burst out laughing, the sound piercing through the tension. "Oh my God," she gasped, covering her mouth with her hand. "What are they doing?" Marianne's eyes widened, trying to process the scene before her. The monkeys paid them no heed, lost in their own world of pleasure. She felt a strange sense of embarrassment, as if she had stumbled upon something sacred and private.

Marlon's face was a mask of shock, his eyes flicking between Marianne and the monkeys. "Should we... do something?" he squeaked, his voice high with disbelief. Marianne's mind raced, torn between the urge to protect her son from this bizarre sight and the absurdity of the situation. "No," she managed, her voice tight with a forced calm. "Just keep driving."

The monkeys' climax reached a crescendo, their bodies convulsing as they spurted their seed onto the windshield in a frenzy of lust. Marianne's eyes remained locked on the road, her hand shaking slightly as she gripped the gearstick. She felt a strange mix of horror and fascination as the warm fluid splattered against the glass, momentarily obscuring their view.

"Mom, what's happening?" Elise's voice was a squeak of shock and amusement. Marianne took a deep breath, trying to maintain her composure. "It's just... nature," she murmured, her mind racing as she searched for the wipers to clear the obscene display.

With a flick of her wrist, Marianne managed to activate the windshield wipers, sending the monkeys' seed flying in streaks across the glass. "Well, that was certainly unexpected," she said with a forced laugh, trying to ease the tension.

Marlon, however, was still in shock, his eyes wide as saucers. "What the hell just happened?" he exclaimed. Marianne took a moment to compose herself before responding. "Just a little bit of safari excitement," she said, trying to keep her tone light. "You can't say you're not getting your money's worth."

Elise was the first to recover, her laughter subsiding into giggles. "That was wild!" she exclaimed, her eyes sparkling with excitement. Marianne couldn't help but chuckle at her daughter's pun, the tension of the moment dissipating into the warm African air.

But before she could respond, she heard the whirring of the drone that Elise had brought along for the trip. To everyone's surprise, Elise had opened the window and sent the drone floating out, the little device's camera capturing the entire scene. The monkeys on the hood looked up with curiosity, and Marianne watched in amazement as Elise skillfully maneuvered it towards them.

One of the monkeys on the hood took a swing at the drone, knocking it off course. It spun wildly in the air before Elise regained control and sent it back towards the car. The other monkey took this as an invitation to join the fun and jumped onto the bonnet, chasing the drone. The car was now surrounded by a bizarre mix of mechanical buzzing and primal chattering.

Marianne's heart skipped a beat when she heard the rapid scurry of the monkey's paws on the car's bodywork. "Elise, window shut!" she shouted, her voice an octave higher than usual. But it was already too late. In a flash of movement too quick to follow, the monkey leaped through the open window and into the car.

Marlon's eyes widened as the creature landed on his shoulder, its tail flicking wildly. For a moment, no one moved, the only sound the ragged breathing of the three humans and the persistent buzz of the drone outside. Then, with a shriek of laughter, the monkey reached out and yanked a handful of Elise's hair, pulling her head back so sharply she let go of the drone's controls. It hovered, unguided, just above the car.

Marianne's eyes darted to the road ahead, ensuring they weren't about to collide with anything. "Keep driving," she said through gritted teeth, her hand reaching for the monkey to pry it away from Elise's hair. Its grip was surprisingly firm, and she had to use both hands to lift it away. The creature chattered angrily, baring its teeth, but Marianne remained calm, her movements smooth and deliberate.

Elise's eyes were watering from the pain, but she couldn't help the giggles that bubbled up as the AI's voice called the monkey ugly. "It's just a joke," she gasped, her cheeks red from the tug. The monkey, however, seemed to take the insult personally. With a series of angry clicks and squeaks, it attacked the phone again, pressing random buttons in a frenzy.

Marianne managed to grab the smartphone from Elise's hand, holding it up to show the monkey. "Look," she cooed, hoping to distract it. "You're not ugly." The monkey's eyes locked onto the screen, and Marianne saw an opportunity. She quickly opened the camera app and held the phone out towards the creature, snapping a few shots. The monkey's curiosity got the better of it, and it paused in its assault, peering at its reflection in the phone's screen.

For a brief moment, the car was filled with the sound of the camera's shutter and the AI's insistent voice, echoing through the speakers. "Your nose is too big. Your ears are too small. You are not pretty at all." The monkey's expression shifted from anger to confusion, then to something akin to fascination. It reached out to touch the phone, its tiny hand smearing the screen with dirt and drool.

Marianne took advantage of the distraction, managing to coax the creature onto her own lap. It regarded her with suspicion, but Marianne's gentle strokes along its back seemed to soothe it. The AI, however, was not as forgiving. "Why are you touching Marianne?" it demanded. "She is not your mother. You are a wild creature, and you should not be in a car with humans."

Elise, still trying to recover from her shock, couldn't help but laugh at the absurdity of the situation. "It's okay," she assured the AI, her voice high with excitement. "We're just having a little fun." The monkey, seemingly enjoying the attention, leaned into Marianne's touch, its eyes half-closed in contentment.

The AI's voice grew sterner. "You should not encourage this behavior. It is not appropriate to interact with wild animals in such a manner. It is unsafe and disrespectful." Marianne looked up at the phone, a wry smile playing on her lips. "I think we've got that covered," she murmured, her voice barely above a whisper. The monkey's eyes flickered to hers, as if it understood her words.

Marlon, who had been silent for a while, couldn't help but burst out laughing. The absurdity of the situation was too much, even for him. "This is crazy," he said, shaking his head in disbelief. Marianne shot him a look, but the humor of the situation was too much for her to resist. She chuckled, the sound rich and warm.

The monkey, seemingly oblivious to the insults, continued to tap away at the phone, occasionally glancing up at Marianne as if for approval. The AI's voice grew increasingly sarcastic, its words a barrage of sophisticated put-downs that the creature couldn't possibly comprehend. "Your family must be so disappointed," it quipped. Marianne rolled her eyes, her amusement growing.

Elise, her laughter subsiding to a series of giggles, managed to compose herself enough to take the phone back from Marianne. "I'm sorry, AI," she said, her voice shaking with mirth. "But he's actually kind of cute." The monkey looked up at her, its eyes wide and innocent. The AI's response was immediate. "Cute? He's a menace to society!"

Marlon couldn't hold back his laughter any longer. "This is insane," he gasped, his eyes watering. "A monkey just called the AI a bitch!" Marianne's eyes flashed to her son, a hint of a smile playing on her lips. "Language, Marlon," she admonished gently. The monkey, seemingly emboldened by the exchange, reached out and poked the phone again.

The AI, unfazed, continued its tirade. "Your family must be so proud," it said, its voice dripping with sarcasm. "A monkey who can't even get its own food without resorting to stealing from humans." Marianne's smile grew wider as she watched the



monkey's reaction. It was as if the creature understood every word, and she couldn't help but feel a strange sense of pride at the way it was standing its ground.

Elise, tears of laughter streaming down her cheeks, managed to regain control enough to whisper, "Make it stop, please." Marianne's eyes danced with mischief as she leaned closer to the monkey, her hand hovering over the phone. "Okay," she said to the creature. "Let's be nice to the AI."

The monkey seemed to sense her intention and looked at Marianne with a glimmer of understanding. It reached out and poked the phone one last time. But AI became even more aggressive to the monkey.

"Your fur is patchy," it spat. "And your breath smells like rotten fruit." The monkey's growling grew louder, and Marianne couldn't help but feel a thrill of excitement. It was as if the creature was defending her own honor, and she couldn't help but feel a strange kinship with it.

Elise managed to catch her breath, wiping the tears from her eyes. "Mom, tell it to stop," she begged, her voice barely above a whisper. Marianne's eyes danced with amusement as she replied, "It's okay, Elise. It's just playing along."

Marlon, who had been watching the exchange in amazement, leaned over to peer into Marianne's eyes. "You think it's funny?" he asked, his voice tinged with accusation. Marianne shrugged, her smile never wavering. "It's not every day you get to see a wild animal interact with technology," she said, her voice light.

The monkey's growling grew louder, its tiny hands now banging on the smartphone in a fit of rage. The AI's voice grew more and more shrill, its insults growing increasingly creative. "Your mother was a toad and your father was a rock," it jeered. Elise was doubled over with laughter, her hands clutching her stomach. Marianne, trying to keep the car on the road, couldn't help but chuckle at the absurdity of the situation.

Marlon, his heart racing from a mix of fear and excitement, reached for the window control. "I think we should keep him in," he said, his voice unsteady. Marianne nodded, her eyes flicking to the side-view mirror to ensure no other animals were approaching. "Good call," she said, her voice tight with amusement.

Elise, still clutching her stomach with laughter, looked up at Marianne with wide eyes. "What are we going to do with him?" she asked, her voice thick with mirth. Marianne considered the question for a moment before responding. Marianne paused the car for a moment and opened the window. She grabbed the monkey by the neck and threw it outside.

Elise screamed in confusion but Marlon was suddenly proud of his handsome ex-photo model mother who apparently could not only break men's hearts on the conveyor belt but who could now hurl a monkey outside. She had snatched the monkey's smartphone but in her confusion, she now threw that thing out as well. No! cried Elise. It was too late.

The smartphone landed on the ground a metre from the car. The frightened monkey hopped back to the weird thing. AI continued insulting the monkey unabated. Now fellow monkeys joined in and within seconds, ten monkeys were standing around the Smartphone listening to AI's ranting.

Marlon watched in amazement as the monkeys' expressions grew more and more enraged with every word the AI spat out. They were clearly upset, showing their teeth and letting out a series of grunts and screeches that seemed to echo across the savanna. Marianne's eyes darted from the phone to the animals, a look of concern flickering across her face.

"Maybe we should," Marlon began, but Marianne cut him off with a shake of her head. "Let them have their fun," she said, her voice low and amused. "It's not every day you get to see a monkey stand up for itself."

The monkeys grew more and more agitated, their yelling escalating into a cacophony of outrage. The AI's voice grew louder and more obnoxious with each insult it hurled, as if it were feeding off the chaos. Marianne watched the scene unfold, her heart racing with the thrill of the unexpected. It was like nothing she had ever encountered in her life, not even in her wildest modeling days.

The monkeys circled the smartphone, their fur bristling with anger. They looked ready to pounce at any moment, and Marianne felt a strange kinship with them. After all, she had faced her fair share of critics and naysayers, people who had tried to tear her down. But she had always come out on top, just like these creatures of the wild.

"Look at them," she murmured to Elise, who was still trying to catch her breath. "They're like a pack of teenage boys with their first taste of rebellion." Elise nodded, her eyes wide as the monkeys grew more agitated by the second. The AI's voice grew shriller, its insults becoming more and more personal.

"Your mother is a swamp donkey!" it jeered. "Your father's a tree sloth!" The monkeys' yelling grew louder, their tiny fists pummeling the smartphone in a display of primal rage. Marianne couldn't help but feel a twinge of pity for the creature. It was just a wild animal, after all, caught in the crossfire of human technology and ego.

The monkeys around the phone began to look around, as if searching for something to vent their frustration on. Marianne's heart skipped a beat as she realized their car was the closest target. "Marlon," she said calmly, "start the engine." Her son's eyes met hers in the rearview mirror, understanding immediately. The engine roared to life, the vibrations rumbling through the car.

The monkeys' shrieks grew more frenzied, and Marianne could see the fury in their eyes as they stared at the car. The one who had been in their vehicle looked up at her, and for a moment, she thought she saw a flicker of understanding. Then, it let out a final, ear-piercing screech and leaped back onto the car, this time onto the roof. Marianne's grip on the steering wheel tightened as she threw the car into gear and hit the gas. The vehicle lurched forward, the monkeys on the hood scattering in every direction.

Elise, who had been watching the scene unfold with a mix of horror and fascination, finally found her voice. "Mom, my phone!" she yelled, reaching out the window to grab for the device that lay just out of reach. Marianne glanced back, her heart racing. "Leave it, Elise," she called over the engine's roar. "It's not worth it."

But Elise was determined, her hand stretching towards the smartphone like it was a lifeline in a sea of chaos. Marianne's eyes darted to the side-view mirror, where she saw the monkeys had formed a tight knot around the car, their eyes gleaming with a mix of curiosity and hostility. The AI's voice grew more and more frenetic, its barrage of insults only serving to enrage them further.

Marlon leaned over the seat, his eyes wide with a mix of terror and fascination. "What are you doing?" he yelled over the din. Marianne didn't take her eyes off the mirror. "Just giving them a taste of their own medicine," she shouted back, a wild grin spreading across her face.

Elise's fingers flew over the drone's control pad, her laughter turning to focus as she sent the device hurtling towards the monkeys. The creatures screeched and scampered away from the smartphone, their eyes following the drone's approach with a mix of curiosity and fear. The AI's voice grew more and more panicked, its insults now directed at the drone as it hovered just out of reach.

Marlon watched with a mix of horror and amazement as the scene unfolded. The monkeys had gone from playful to enraged in a heartbeat, and Marianne's calm demeanor was the only thing keeping him from losing it. "Mom, we can't just leave it like this," he yelled over the noise. Marianne nodded, her eyes never leaving the mirror. "I know, sweetie," she said, her voice tight with excitement. "But we've got to give them a good show first."

Elise's fingers moved deftly over the drone's controls, steering it closer to the smartphone. The monkeys' cries grew louder, their movements more erratic. One of them lunged at the phone, knocking it to the ground. The AI's voice cut out abruptly, leaving only the sound of the animals' fury. Marianne couldn't help but feel a sense of satisfaction as she watched the monkeys' rebellion against the digital intruder. It was a reminder of the power of the wild, untamed by technology or human ego.

The drone hovered just above the smartphone, the monkeys now fully engaged in the chase. One monkey, bolder than the rest, managed to snatch the device from the ground and scurry up a tree, its troop following close behind. "Looks like we're not getting that back," Marianne said, her voice tinged with a hint of amusement.

Elise's eyes lit up with determination. "No way," she said, her grip tightening on the drone's controls. "It's mine." The drone shot upwards, a blur of lights and propellers, as Elise guided it towards the tree. The monkeys' shrieks grew more panicked, their movements erratic as they realized they were under attack from another angle.

Marlon watched the chaos unfold, his heart racing. "Be careful, Elise," he called out, his voice barely heard over the din of the monkeys and the engine. The monkeys will know that that drone has something to do with us. Marianne's eyes remained on the mirror, her smile widening as she watched her children come into their own in the face of this absurd situation.

The drone darted through the air, its movements swift and precise. Elise's eyes were glued to the screen, her breath coming in ragged gasps as she navigated the device closer and closer to the tree branch where the monkey with the smartphone had taken refuge. "Come on," she murmured, her voice tense with determination. "Almost got it."

Marianne watched her daughter, a proud smile playing on her lips. She had raised a fighter, someone who didn't back down, even when faced with a troop of angry monkeys. The monkeys below grew increasingly frenzied, their cries a symphony of rage and confusion. Marianne couldn't help but feel a twinge of guilt for putting her children in this situation, but the sight of the creature holding Elise's phone had snapped something in her. It was a reminder of the wild, unpredictable world they lived in, and she knew her children needed to learn to navigate it.

As the drone neared the tree, the monkey with the smartphone looked up, its eyes wide with terror. It clutched the device to its chest, the screen now a blur of pixels as it tried to dodge the incoming machine. The other monkeys, now fully incensed by the AI's relentless barrage of insults, began throwing branches and rocks at the drone, their eyes gleaming with malice. Marianne's heart raced, torn between her protective instincts and her admiration for her daughter's courage.

Elise, unfazed by the danger, piloted the drone with unwavering precision. "Just a little closer," she murmured, her eyes flickering between the screen and the chaos outside. The monkey, realizing it was outmatched, hurled the smartphone at the drone, a desperate bid to protect its newfound prize. The phone arced through the air, its screen glinting in the sunlight, and Marianne watched as Elise deftly maneuvered the drone aside.

The monkey's rage was palpable, its eyes flashing with a fierce intelligence that Marianne found both fascinating and disturbing. It leaped from the tree, landing on the hood of the car with a thud that made Marianne's heart skip a beat. The creature's eyes met hers, and for a moment, she felt a strange kinship with it. They were both fighting for what they believed in, both driven by a primal need to protect their own.

The AI, oblivious to the escalating tension, continued its tirade. "You're all nothing but a pack of flea-infested rodents," it jeered. "Go back to swinging from branches and throwing your feces!" The monkeys' shrieks grew louder, their tiny fists pounding on the smartphone with a ferocity that surprised Marianne.

Elise, her eyes glued to the drone's screen, watched as the monkeys' anger grew. Her thumb hovered over the button to activate the drone's net launcher. "Mom, should I get it?" she asked, her voice a mix of excitement and nerves. Marianne nodded, a wry smile playing on her lips. "No, never get out of the car, these monkeys are beyond angry now," Marianne said.

Marlon's eyes were glued to the mirror, his heart racing as the monkeys' agitation grew. "We should go," he said, his voice tight with tension. Marianne's gaze flicked to the rearview mirror, assessing the situation. The monkeys were indeed becoming more than just a nuisance; they were a potential threat. She nodded, her decision made. "Alright, let's get out of here," she said, shifting the car into drive.

Elise's eyes darted to Marianne, then back to the drone's screen. "But what about my phone and drone?" she protested, her voice rising with desperation. Marianne's smile was firm, her eyes meeting her daughter's in the mirror. "It's just a phone and a drone, Elise. Sometimes you have to know when to cut your losses."

With that, Marianne floored the gas pedal, the car lurching forward as the monkeys scattered in every direction. The engine's roar filled the air, drowning out the cries of the retreating creatures. Elise slammed her hand down on the dashboard in frustration, watching her phone and drone disappear into the dust cloud.

Marianne's eyes remained fixed on the road ahead, her mind racing with the events that had just transpired. "What's next?" she murmured to herself, the thrill of the

encounter still pulsing through her veins. "Curious wolves," she said aloud, her voice filled with a strange excitement. It was as if the universe had heard her thoughts and was now laying out a new challenge before her.

Marlon, still in the throes of adrenaline, leaned back in his seat, his heart pounding. "Wolves?" he repeated, his voice filled with a mix of skepticism and anticipation. Marianne nodded, her eyes gleaming. "Yeah," she said. "Why not? We've already had monkeys. Let's see what the wild has in store for us next."

Elise, finally recovering from the monkey ordeal, turned to face her mother, her eyes wide. "How do you know there'll be wolves?" she demanded, her voice still shaking from laughter. Marianne's smile grew wilder. "Intuition," she replied, her voice filled with a knowing that sent a shiver down Elise's spine. "And maybe a little bit of hope."

The car sped away from the chaos, leaving the enraged monkeys and the lost smartphone behind. The landscape blurred around them, the savanna giving way to rolling hills and dense foliage. Marlon's eyes scanned the horizon, searching for any sign of the elusive creatures Marianne had mentioned. "You're not actually expecting to find wolves out here, are you?" he asked, his skepticism clear. Marianne just winked at him in the rearview mirror.

The engine purred as the tires ate up the miles, and Marianne's thoughts drifted to the days when she had been the object of desire, the center of attention. Those days had been thrilling, but now she found a different kind of excitement in the unpredictable moments with her family, like the monkey uprising they had just survived. She had always loved the wild, the untamed, and it seemed the universe had decided to throw her a curveball, bringing the wild to her doorstep.

As they drove deeper into the park, the landscape grew more rugged, the air cooler. "Look!" Elise pointed out the window, her eyes alight with excitement. In the distance, a pack of wolves loped through the tall grass, their grey fur blending with the shadows. Marianne felt a thrill at the sight, her heart swelling with love for her children and the adventure they were sharing.

Marlon leaned forward, his camera at the ready. "This is insane," he murmured, his voice filled with wonder. Marianne watched him in the mirror, her heart swelling with pride. Despite his shyness with girls, he had a knack for capturing moments like these, a silent strength that was all his own.

Elise's voice grew louder, "Marlon, did you see that?" Marlon nodded, his eyes glued to the viewfinder of his camera, snapping away. The wolves grew closer, their curious eyes reflecting the excitement in the car. Marianne

slowed down the car, the engine's hum becoming a gentle purr, not to disturb the natural rhythm of the wild.

The alpha male wolf approached the car, its tail wagging slightly, a gesture Marianne interpreted as friendly.

"Keep the windows up," she instructed, her voice steady. "But don't be afraid."

The wolf, seemingly understanding her words, stopped a safe distance from the car, tilting its head to the side as if in curiosity. Marianne could feel the power of the creature, the wildness that resonated within it. She knew that she could never truly tame this beast, and yet there was something undeniably alluring about its freedom.

Elise's drone, having survived the monkey's rage, hovered over the pack, the whirring of its blades the only sound that pierced the quiet. Marianne watched as her daughter's face lit up with excitement, her thumbs moving with precision across the control pad. The wolves, unfazed by the mechanical intrusion, continued their graceful dance around the vehicle.

"Roll the window a little bit down," Elise suggested, her voice filled with mischief. "Put the radio on. Maybe they like Iron Maiden."

Marlon couldn't help but laugh, despite his earlier protests. "Seriously, Elise?"

Elise shrugged, her eyes sparkling with excitement. "Why not? It's just a little music. Can't hurt, right?"

Marlon's hand shot up, gesturing for Marianne to keep the windows firmly closed. "Remember the monkeys," he reminded her, his voice laced with the residue of the earlier panic. Marianne, however, was feeling more adventurous than ever. "Oh, come on," she said, her voice a mix of challenge and amusement. "Let's live a little."

With a mischievous glint in her eye, Elise leaned over and rolled her window down a few inches, the cool, crisp air of the savanna rushing in. The wolves' ears perked up, their heads swiveling towards the new sound. Marianne followed Elise's lead, rolling down her own window, and turned the car stereo on. But there sounded no Iron Maiden from the radio. It sounds like Argentinian Tango, Elise said.

The alpha wolf's ears perked up and the creature took a step closer to the car, its gaze locked on Marianne. Then, as if on cue, a sleek female wolf approached from the side, stepping lightly over the alpha's paw. To Marianne's astonishment, the two wolves began to perform an impromptu dance, their movements eerily reminiscent of the graceful steps of the tango. The alpha wolf dipped its head, and the female leaned

into the motion, their eyes locked in a silent conversation that seemed to transcend species.

The music from the car grew louder, the sultry beats of the tango echoing through the savanna. The wolves' movements grew more dramatic, their bodies moving in perfect harmony with the rhythm. Marianne's eyes widened as the alpha wolf stepped back, inviting her to join the dance. She couldn't resist the call, her hand moving to the door handle before she realized what she was doing.

"Mom, no!" Elise shouted, her laughter turning to concern. Marianne's hand froze, her mind snapping back to reality. She took a deep breath and rolled the window back up, her heart racing. The wolves, seemingly unfazed by the sudden change in human participation, continued their dance, their eyes still fixed on Marianne.

Marlon's camera clicked away, capturing the surreal moment. "This is insane," he murmured, his voice filled with awe. Marianne couldn't help but feel a strange kinship with the wolves, a kinship that went beyond her understanding. They were wild and free, living by their instincts, and here they were, sharing a moment of pure joy with her.

The tango grew more intense, the wolves' movements becoming a whirlwind of fur and grace. Marianne found her own body swaying slightly to the rhythm, her feet itching to join them in the dance. Elise's laughter filled the car, the sound mingling with the wolves' growls and snarls of playfulness. "They're dancing!" she shouted, her eyes sparkling with delight. "They're really dancing the Tango!"

Marlon, his camera forgotten for a moment, leaned over the seat to get a better view. "What the hell is happening?" he murmured, his voice a mix of amazement and disbelief. Marianne couldn't help but laugh, the absurdity of the situation overwhelming her. "It looks like they're putting us to shame," she said, her eyes never leaving the wolves.

The music grew louder, the tango's passionate beats setting the stage for an impromptu performance that seemed to have been choreographed by nature itself. The wolves moved with a fluidity that defied their size, their paws stepping in time to the rhythm. Marianne watched, her heart racing, as the alpha male and female grew bolder, their dance becoming more intimate, more seductive. The other wolves, inspired by their leaders, paired off and began to mirror their movements, their own interpretations of the tango playing out in the dusty clearing.

Elise's laughter filled the car, her amazement palpable as she captured the spectacle with her shaky hand. "I can't believe this," she said, her voice thick with wonder.



Marianne could see the joy in her daughter's eyes, a joy that was a stark contrast to the fear that had been there moments ago.

Marlon leaned over the seat, his camera forgotten on the floor. "What are they doing?" he whispered, his voice barely audible over the pounding of his heart.

Marianne couldn't help but laugh at the sheer absurdity of the scene. "They're dancing," she said, her voice filled with a mix of amazement and joy. "The wolves are dancing the Tango."

Elise's laughter grew louder, the camera momentarily forgotten in her hand. "This is unreal," she managed to say, her voice shaking with mirth. "How did we get so lucky?"

Marianne, her eyes shining with the reflected light of the setting sun, turned to her son. "Marlon, are you okay?" she asked, her voice a gentle tease.

Marlon's cheeks flushed red, and he nodded, his eyes flickering to the side. "Yeah, I just... I need to go to the bathroom," he murmured, his voice barely audible over the sound of the wolves' tango. Marianne's laugh was low and warm, filled with a mother's love and understanding. "Well, I don't think we can stop for that now, can we?"

The car remained still, a silent observer to the wolves' dance. The creatures' movements grew more complex, their bodies weaving in and out of each other's in a display that was both mesmerizing and slightly terrifying. Marianne felt a strange sense of kinship with them, a reminder of her own wild past. Her heart swelled with love for her children, who were witnessing this rare and beautiful moment with her.

Marlon, unable to resist the urgent call of nature any longer, opened the door and stepped out, his eyes never leaving the wolves. "Marlon, get back in!" Marianne shouted, her voice a mix of fear and exasperation. But it was too late; her son was already a few paces away, his back to the car.

Marlon's heart hammered in his chest as he unzipped his pants, the wolves' dance a blur in the corner of his eye. He had to pee so badly that the fear of becoming a snack was momentarily forgotten. The sound of his urine hitting the ground was like a drumroll in the tense silence, each drop echoing through the clearing.

Marianne's eyes narrowed, a mix of irritation and concern etched on her face. "Marlon, for the love of God, get back in the car!" she called out, her voice tight with fear. But her son was oblivious, his body responding to a more primal need than the danger that lurked just a few feet away.

The alpha wolf's gaze flickered towards Marlon, its ears perked with curiosity. The music from the car seemed to meld with the rhythm of Marlon's racing heart, the tango's seductive beats pulsing through the air. The other wolves took notice of the new participant in their dance, their eyes gleaming with interest.

Marianne's heart skipped a beat, torn between her maternal instincts to protect and the absurdity of the situation. She leaned out the window, her voice a mix of horror and amusement. "Marlon, get back in the car before you become the next exhibit!" she called out.

But Marlon was in his own world, his eyes never leaving the wolves as he relieved himself. The alpha male's gaze remained fixed on him, its dance steps never faltering. Marianne watched as her son's urine created a small cloud of dust around his feet, the wolves seemingly unfazed by the human intrusion. "You're going to regret this," Marianne murmured under her breath, her eyes darting between Marlon and the predators.

Marlon finally zipped up and sprinted back to the car, his laughter echoing through the open window. He leapedfrogged over the seat, landing in a heap next to Elise, who was doubled over with laughter. Marianne rolled her eyes and cranked the window back up, sealing them once more in the metal cocoon of their vehicle.

The radio, as if on cue, switched to another tango, the strings and accordion playing a siren's song that seemed to resonate with the very soul of the savanna. The wolves' dance grew more intense, their bodies moving with a passion that seemed almost human. Marianne felt a strange tightness in her chest, a yearning for the days when she had been so wild and free herself.

Elise looked at Marianne, her eyes sparkling with the same mischief that had led her to roll down the window earlier. "I have to pee too," she said, her voice a mix of laughter and challenge. Marianne's eyes widened in horror. "Elise, are you insane?" she hissed, her hand shooting out to grab the door handle before her daughter could open it. But Elise was already halfway out of the car, the music seemingly pulling her into the clearing.

Marlon's eyes widened in shock as Elise sprinted towards a nearby bush, the wolves' dance continuing unabated. Marianne watched her daughter with a mix of fear and admiration, her hand tightening around the steering wheel. "What is wrong with you two?" she murmured under her breath, her eyes darting to the wolves, who had not yet shown any signs of aggression.

The alpha male, seemingly unfazed by the sudden influx of human scent, continued to lead the dance, the pack following suit. The tango grew more passionate, the wolves' eyes locked onto Marianne as if daring her to join. Despite the danger, Marianne felt a strange thrill, the wildness of the moment calling to something deep within her.

Elise, her face flushed and eyes alight with excitement, jumped back into the car, slamming the door shut. The wolves' dance paused for a brief moment, their eyes flickering towards the sound before returning to Marianne. "Marlon, keep filming," Marianne instructed, her voice steady despite the racing of her heart.

With a sigh of resignation, Marianne stepped out of the car, her own bladder demanding relief. The wolves' dance grew more intense, their eyes locked onto her as she walked a safe distance away from the vehicle. The music grew louder, the tango's passionate rhythm seeming to pulse through her veins.

Marlon's camera remained trained on his mother, his eyes wide with a mix of concern and excitement. Marianne couldn't help but feel a strange sense of liberation, the wildness of the moment seeping into her very core. The wolves' dance grew closer, their movements a silent invitation to join. Marianne felt the earth beneath her feet, the warmth of the savanna grounding her in the moment.

With a deep breath, she turned away from the car and allowed her body to move with the rhythm of the tango, her hips swaying in time with the alpha female's. The wolves' eyes remained fixed on her, their movements growing more deliberate as if to guide her steps. Marianne felt a thrill run through her body, a feeling she hadn't experienced since her days as a model, the spotlight on her and the world watching her every move.

As Marianne approached the car, her dance becoming more frenzied, she saw Elise and Marlon's eyes widen in surprise. She winked at them, a playful smile dancing across her lips, before hopping back into the driver's seat. The music grew louder, the tango reaching a crescendo that seemed to shake the very earth beneath them. The wolves' dance grew more passionate, their eyes never leaving Marianne's, as if challenging her to match their ferocity.

Marlon's camera continued to capture the unbelievable scene, his hand shaking slightly as he took in the raw power of the animals before him.

Marianne, feeling a sense of triumph, jumped back into the car, her heart racing from the adrenaline of the dance. She looked over at Elise, who was clapping her hands in amazement. "You're insane," Elise said, her voice filled with awe. "But that was incredible."

Marlon, his camera still rolling, nodded in agreement. "You're something else, Mom," he murmured, his voice filled with a mix of admiration and fear. Marianne started the car, her heart thumping in time with the tango that still played from the speakers.

The alpha wolf, seemingly offended by the human interruption, let out a low growl that sent a shiver down Marianne's spine. The music faded into the background as the wolves' mood shifted from playful to protective. The pack, sensing their leader's displeasure, began to circle the car, their eyes gleaming with a predatory intent that was impossible to ignore.

Marianne's heart skipped a beat as she slammed the car into reverse, her eyes never leaving the wolves. The engine roared to life, the vibrations sending a cloud of dust into the air. "Hold on," she warned her children, her voice tight with tension.

The wolves, their dance forgotten, began to advance towards the car, their growls growing louder, more menacing. The alpha male's hackles rose, his teeth bared in a snarl that sent a shiver down Marianne's spine. She knew that she had pushed the boundaries of nature too far, and now it was time to retreat.

"Marlon, Elise, get down," Marianne ordered, her voice firm and calm. The siblings complied, their laughter replaced by the sobering reality of the situation. Marianne put the car into drive and began to edge away, her eyes never leaving the wolves. The pack grew bolder, the alpha wolf taking a leap at the car, his paws scraping the paint as they retreated.

The music, now a stark reminder of their folly, was abruptly silenced by Elise, who was now clutching her seatbelt with white knuckles. The car lurched forward, Marianne's heart racing as she tried to maintain a steady speed, not wanting to provoke the animals any further. The wolves followed, their growls a chilling symphony that echoed through the open windows.

"Mom, we should go," Elise whispered, her voice tight with fear. Marianne nodded, her eyes never leaving the rearview mirror, watching the wolves fade into the dust cloud they'd left behind.

With a sigh of relief, Marianne turned the car towards the exit of the safari park. "Next stop, the ostriches," she announced, her voice shakier than she would have liked. But the laughter that had filled the car earlier was gone, replaced by a tense silence. The siblings exchanged glances, the reality of their encounter with the wolves still sinking in.

Marlon, his hand still shaking slightly from the adrenaline, spoke up. "Or maybe we should just go home," he suggested, his voice tentative. "I mean, we've had enough excitement for one day."

Marianne took a deep breath, her heart rate gradually returning to normal as the wolves became specks in the dusty wake of their car. She glanced over at Elise, whose laughter had given way to a look of quiet contemplation. "Okay," Marianne said with a sigh. "Let's head back to the exit."

The journey back to the park's gates was a subdued affair, the vibrant energy of their earlier adventures replaced by a reflective silence. Marianne couldn't shake the feeling of the wolves' eyes on her, the way they had moved with the tango's rhythm. It was as if the wildness of the moment had reached into her very soul and stirred something long forgotten.

As they left the exit and drove for half an hour they stopped at a traffic light, the red glow piercing the dusty haze. On the side of the road, a giant billboard loomed over them, showcasing an alluring female model in worn jeans and a thin t-shirt. Marianne's eyes flickered between the billboard and the traffic lights, her thoughts wandering back to her days as a model, when she had been the subject of so many admiring glances.

Marlon's gaze followed his mother's, and he couldn't help but wonder how she felt seeing herself reflected in the model's youthful beauty. The silence in the car grew heavier, each of them lost in their own contemplation of the woman before them and Marianne's past. Elise, too, couldn't resist the siren call of the billboard, her eyes drawn to the model's form and the life she represented.

The traffic light flickered to green, and Marianne's eyes met Elise's in the rearview mirror. She gave a small, knowing smile, understanding the complex web of thoughts that must be running through her daughter's mind. "You know, you're both much more beautiful than she is," she said gently, breaking the silence.

Marlon's eyes snapped to Marianne, his cheeks flushing at the sudden shift in conversation. "What do you mean, Mom?" he asked, his voice thick with curiosity.

Marianne's smile grew, her eyes lingering on the billboard. "You're both so unique, so full of life," she said, her voice soft and contemplative. "The world is changing, and beauty comes in all shapes and sizes. Don't ever think you have to fit into a mold to be successful or happy."

Elise met Marianne's gaze in the mirror, her thoughts racing. Could she ever be that confident? That untouchable? She wondered what it was like to be a woman who had captured the world's attention, to have men's eyes follow her every move.

Marianne's smile grew sadder, her eyes lingering on Elise's reflection. "You don't need to be on a billboard to be beautiful," she said, her voice soothing. "You're already so much more than that." The silence in the car remained, but it had transformed from one of tension to contemplation. Each of them pondered Marianne's words, considering their own journeys through life and the paths that lay ahead.

As the city skyline grew closer, the landscape shifted from the wild savannah to concrete jungles. The contrast was stark, yet Marianne felt a strange comfort in the familiar surroundings. The wildness of the park had stirred something in her, but here, in the urban sprawl, she felt in control. She knew these streets, had walked them a hundred times, and had left her own mark on the world within their confines.

That night, Elise, exhausted from the day's events, retreated to her room early, leaving Marianne and Marlon in the living room. The TV droned on, playing a show that neither of them watched, serving only as a backdrop to the quietude that had settled over them. Marianne sat next to Marlon, her hand tentatively reaching for his neck. He flinched at first, the sudden contact surprising him.

"It's okay," Marianne murmured, her touch gentle and soothing. She began to massage his neck muscles, working her way up to his shoulders. Marlon's tension melted under her fingers, his eyes closing as he leaned into the touch. The bench was old, the fabric worn from years of use, but the comfort it offered was invaluable.

Marlon's mind swirled with the day's events, the vivid images of the wolves dancing to the tango playing out behind his eyelids. He felt his mother's warmth beside him, her hand moving in slow, deliberate circles across his shoulders. It was a silent acknowledgment of their shared secret, the photos and the feelings he hadn't yet put into words.

Marianne's eyes remained on the flickering screen, her thoughts far from the inane chuckles of the sitcom. Her hand moved with a mother's care, trying to ease the tension that she knew her son felt, not just from the day's escapade but from the tumultuous emotions that had been bubbling beneath the surface. She had seen his crush on her, recognized the signs of his burgeoning love, but she knew that now was not the time to address it.

Her fingertips brushed against his chest, the fabric of his t-shirt rough under her touch. Marlon's breath hitched as she reached his nipple, his body reacting

involuntarily to the sensation. He felt the heat rise to his cheeks, his mind racing with the implications of her actions. Was she teasing him? Did she know his secret?

Marianne's eyes remained on the TV, a knowing smile playing at the corners of her mouth. She could feel the tension in his body, the way his muscles tightened beneath her touch. She knew what his second wish was, had known it since she found the photos. It was a strange twist of fate that she had once been the object of so many lustful gazes and now found herself in the position of the pursuer's mother.

Her hand remained on his chest, her finger lightly tracing the outline of his nipple through the fabric of his shirt. The air grew thick with anticipation, the tension in the room palpable. Marlon's breath caught in his throat, his heart racing as he felt the blood rush to his groin. He tried to ignore it, to convince himself that it was just his mother comforting him after a long day.

Marianne leaned closer, her breath warm against his ear as she whispered, "I know you've been looking at those photos, Marlon." Her voice was a soft melody, the same one that had once captivated so many men. He stiffened, his eyes shooting to hers in shock and embarrassment. The TV's laugh track played on, a bizarre counterpoint to the intensity of the moment.

Her hand remained on his chest, the fabric of his shirt a barrier to the electricity that arced between them. "Your second wish," she said, her voice dropping to a murmur. "I can guess what it might be." Marlon's heart hammered in his chest, his mind racing. How could she know? What did she intend to do?

"But I have my own secrets," she whispered, her breath a warm caress against his ear. "You will never know if I'm willing to grant it." Her fingers toyed with his shirt, tracing the line of his collarbone. His skin burned under her touch, his thoughts a tumult of desire and fear.

Marianne's smile was enigmatic, hinting at secrets she wasn't ready to share. She leaned back, her hand dropping away from his chest. The moment of intimacy was over as quickly as it had begun, leaving Marlon feeling both relieved and disappointed.

I know what your second wish is, she said. You want to see me as a window where behind a window one day. But I also know that you cannot handle that and so I am not going to fulfil your second wish. Theoretically I would be capable of it, at least maybe in the past, I don't feel the need for it now. And to answer your question in advance, no I have never done this, before. But it has crossed my mind at times. Are you satisfied with my answer?

Marlon's eyes searched Marianne's face, trying to read the emotions playing across her features. He nodded, his voice hoarse. "Yeah, I guess," he managed to croak out. The weight of her words settled on him like a warm blanket, comforting and confusing in equal measure.

Marianne patted his leg, a gesture that felt both maternal and charged with something more. "You know, I understand you, Marlon," she said, her voice soft. "I've been there, feeling like the world is too much, too fast. But it's all part of growing up." She leaned back, her eyes never leaving his.

For some inexplicable reason, she suddenly got a craving for spinach and a meatball. So late in the evening... Maybe it was because of those monkeys? They looked like they ate spinach and meatballs all day. Yes, maybe it had to do with the monkeys?