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Sunbeams woke Annabelle at dawn. She found a poem on the pillow next to her, on the new bed.

Asking

I looked for you
deep in August water
where peace abounded
amid stormy white caps

I looked for you
in reading class
when they decided I couldn't read
and forced my eyes
with a machine
to move them very fast

when all I really wanted
was to hold your warm breast.

I looked for you
in the woods
which smelt of leaves
bark and rock
wet with time

but you were not there.

Your path was deep
In Maya time
in a dream so dark
its remembering made you bleed

deep but waking to the thought
of your own wild perfection.

She crept down the unfamiliar staircase and found Eddie sitting cross-legged in meditation on the living-room floor.

"Thank you for the poem," she whispered.

She stumbled around the new kitchen, preparing tea and cold cereal.

"How's the baby today?" asked Eddie, joining her at the kitchen counter.

She sighed. "Did we really do that?"

He nodded. "It's for real."

They packed the car while the sun rose. Annabelle had written her letter to advise Dennis of the marriage.

"I'll mail it in Vermont," she said, "that way he'll get it on Monday. He doesn't need to know before then."

Sarah wanted to eat the candy Eddie had brought but Annabelle told her to wait until after lunch. They sang Christmas carols. After stopping for fast food midway up Route 93, Sarah fell asleep. They drove through the silent notch, surrounded by intense foliage.

"It's good we left in the morning," said Eddie, "we're missing a lot of traffic; this will be the peak leaf-peeping weekend."

Annabelle remained silent.

"What are you thinking about?" he asked.

"How am I ever going to face everyone at MVI again, after that scene we had? They're going to think we are both completely crazy."

"No," said Eddie shaking his head, "we cleaned everything up. And we're taking off next week to move into the house. By the time we get back, it will be old news. And I'm sure they're all laughing