

📌 PART.013 – Lemon Tea, Baby

Kicks & Tiny Health Promises

The city outside was wrapped in winter's hush. Snowflakes drifted down slowly, lazily, almost as if they had nowhere urgent to be. The streetlamp outside Susie's apartment flickered, casting a warm yellow glow onto the blanketed sidewalk below.

It was December, deep into the second year of the pandemic. Everything felt different now—quieter, slower. Even time itself seemed softer, stretching like warm honey.

She leaned against the windowpane for a moment, her breath fogging up the glass. She traced a tiny heart into the mist with her fingertip.

She had finished work early today, her body grateful for the extra rest. She wasn't alone anymore. The soft, secret flutters in her belly reminded her of that.

The baby.

She smiled and turned away from the window, making her way to the small wooden dining table.

The heater rumbled gently in the background, filling the apartment with warmth. The scent of lemon and ginger tea curled into the air, mingling with the faintest traces of cinnamon from the bakery downstairs.

On the table, scattered like fallen leaves, were more than twenty small cash register receipts. Some were crumpled, some had tiny grease stains from past coffee breaks, and some had faded ink where she had scribbled tiny thoughts. Tiny dreams.

She picked up the notebook that Tanya had given her. Its cover was worn at the edges, the spine cracked from too much flipping, but that only made it more familiar.

Tonight, she wasn't just writing resolutions.

Tonight, she was building something.

A House to Hold a Dream

Tanya always said, *"A goal without structure is just a wish."*

But Susie didn't want this to feel like a checklist.

This wasn't about waking up at 6 AM, drinking two liters of water, or tracking calories. This was about creating something steady, something real.

She picked up a pen and started to sketch.

At first, just a few simple lines.

Then, as if led by instinct, she drew a little house—a cozy one, with a tall chimney and a garden that spilled over the front porch. A house where she could imagine warmth, laughter, and safety.

"Start with the foundation," she thought, pressing the pen against the page.

And beneath the drawing, she wrote one word.

Health.

Because health was the foundation of everything.

Especially now. Especially for her baby.

She traced the word with her fingertips, as if grounding it into the page.

Memories of a Nurse's Touch

The hospital waiting room had smelled like antiseptic and lavender lotion.

She remembered sitting there, gripping her phone, waiting for Paul's test results.

The doctor had come out, mask covering half his face, but she could see the exhaustion in his eyes.

"Positive."

Susie had blinked at him, feeling the whole world tilt slightly.

For the next two weeks, Paul had lived in the bedroom while she stayed in the living room, a thin wooden door

separating them. They talked through the phone, even though they were only a few feet apart.

At night, she would press the screen of her phone to her cheek, closing her eyes, pretending it was his hand. She had never been so aware of her own breath before—how fragile it was, how every inhale mattered.

The nurses had told her small things:

"Steam your face with a warm towel if your throat feels dry."

"Sleep on your side to help your breathing."

"Crack open a window for fresh air, even in winter."

Little rituals of care. Small acts that kept the body steady.

Now, months later, she still did them out of habit. She reached for a receipt and flipped it over to the blank side.

She picked up her pen and wrote:

"Health isn't about rules. It's about care. Tiny, daily care."


She smiled.


These weren't just habits.


They were memories in the making.


Little Rituals of Care

Her fingers hovered over the receipts, picking up old scribbles, half-written notes:

 **Morning Rituals** → Warm ginger tea, a deep breath by the window. *A quiet hello to the day.*

 **Hands & Home** → Wipe the doorknobs, wash the groceries, wash away the worry.

 **Sleep Like a Cat** → Nap when the baby says nap. No guilt. Just rest.

 **Fresh Air, Always** → Even if it's just a step outside, breathe. Open the windows. Let the world in.

 **Eat in Colors** → Not for a diet, not for a rulebook—but because it makes the plate look happy.

She smiled.

She was writing a letter to herself. A reminder. A

promise.

A soft nudge inside her belly made her pause.

She placed a hand over it, feeling the fluttering movement.

"I know, I know," she whispered. "I won't forget you."

Letters to the Future

She pulled more receipts toward her, flipping through them.

🌿 "Take a ballet class – Grace & balance are health too!"

☀️ "Palm trees, beach vacation on June 21 – Sunlight is healing."

👨👩👧 "Paul's return – The heart needs its people."

💛 "Mom & Dad's health – Because their laughter makes the world feel right."

She looked at them for a long moment, then reached for the pen one last time.

"For you, little one—A year of health, warmth, and happiness. A safe, steady home. Step by step, we'll

build it together."

She leaned back in her chair, listening to the soft hum of the heater, the snow whispering outside, the quiet of the world in this moment.

She pressed her palm over her heart, feeling its steady rhythm.

Then, almost without thinking, she whispered the words out loud—just for herself, just for the baby, just for the night.

"A strong home starts with a strong foundation."

And for the first time in a long while, she felt like she was already building it.

✨ END OF EPISODE 10 ✨