

A Triangle Plus One

Ray Wilson was sitting at his desk when George Banning walked in. Ray knew that his wife and George had been having an affair.

George stood mute like a statue in front of Ray's desk.

"Well, sit down, for chrissakes. It's killing my neck to keep looking up at you," said Ray. "Want a cup of coffee?"

"Sure," George mumbled nervously. "Do you mind if I smoke?"

"I don't care if you set yourself on fire," Ray replied mirthlessly.

After George had lit his cigarette, took a deep drag on his cigarette and gulped down some coffee, he appeared a bit calmer. "I think Maggie may have found herself a new boyfriend."

Ray bit down on his cigar. "So it looks like she's done with both of us, huh? Ain't that a pisser?"

A heartbeat later. "You know, George, I wouldn't drink any more of that coffee if I were you."

"Why? Did you slip me something?" George tried to stand, but he felt dizzy so he flopped back into his chair.

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Just then the office door opened and Ray's wife Maggie sashayed in. A tall, young man came in behind her.

"Looks like you two have been having a friendly drink," Maggie said with a sneer.

Ray said, "George, I laced the bottom of your coffee cup with pure nicotine. Maggie gave me a liquefied black tar that remains after soaking the tobacco leaves in the sun for a few days."

Maggie smiled. "Roberto is from South America. He knows all about things like that."

"My God," gasped George. "Maggie gave me the same nicotine liquid to put into your coffee. I put some drops into your coffee when your back was turned. We're both dead men!"

Ray felt like his body was on fire. He was becoming disoriented, but he managed to whip out the semi-automatic handgun from his right desk drawer. "Looks like we're all gonna die today."

Maggie inched closer to Roberto. "I removed the clip from your gun last night, Ray. I was careful to remove all the bullets and then I put it back. You wanted me to learn how to use that gun for protection, remember?"

"I showed you *almost* everything about this gun." Ray pressed the magazine clip release. The empty clip fell with a dull thud on his desk.

"I had one last lesson to show you, but you told me you were too busy, so we kept putting it off."

"I learned enough," Maggie said, in a tight, clipped voice. "Come, Roberto, they should both be dead in a few minutes. The nicotine will make it look like they both died from heart failure."

George began coughing furiously, clutching at his chest. "I can't breathe," he said weakly.

"I'm sorry, George," said Maggie. "I'm the kind of girl that gets bored with men easily."

Ray coughed violently. "Hear that, Robbie-boy. You'll be the next one to bite the bullet!" Ray waved his handgun around wildly, and then forced himself to hold it steady.

"Ray, put that silly thing down. I took out all the bullets." Maggie said.

"You should have let me give you that *last lesson*, Maggie." There was an ugly slash of a grin on Ray's face. "I was going to show you how to eject the last round from the chamber—*something you should do even if the clip is empty or the clip has been removed*. I always keep one round in the chamber, ready to fire."

Maggie appeared confused; then her face lit up with terror-filled comprehension. "Oh, no—"

Roberto's eyes grew large with fear as he stepped away from Maggie and ran for the door.

Ray coughed brutally. "That's right, you cheating parasite. Even if the magazine clip is empty, there's still one round left in the chamber."

Ray managed to hold the small gun steady and aim directly at Maggie's well-endowed chest, as he squeezed the trigger.

He hit his target with deadly accuracy.

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Revised 2022
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