

CHAPTER 1

The Baby Is Born

One beautiful summer day in 1860, Roger Button was certain he was the luckiest man in the world. He lived with his lovely wife in a beautiful house. The Buttons owned a large company and were very rich. They sold hardware* items to stores in the Baltimore area, and they had a lot of important friends. The only thing missing in their lives was a child, but today they were going to have one.

Roger left his home early that morning. His heart was beating fast as he got into his carriage*. But he told his driver calmly, "To the hospital, please, Angus."



Roger left his home early that morning.

Mr. Button was going to visit his wife and meet their new baby for the first time. Mrs. Button was staying at the Maryland Private Hospital, a 10-minute ride away.

When Roger arrived at the hospital, he saw Dr. Keene, his old family doctor, standing outside. The doctor looked very worried.

"Dr. Keene! Dr. Keene!" Roger shouted, opening his carriage door. He tried to appear calm but it was not easy. "Good morning. How is my wife? Is she all right?"

Roger was surprised because Dr. Keene looked uncomfortable.

hardware
חומרי בניין / מואד הבנא

carriage
סליכרה / עריה

"Yes, Mr. Button, your wife is fine. She has given birth and she is well," said Dr. Keene.

"And the baby?" asked Roger "How is it? Is it a boy?"

Now, the doctor looked more uncomfortable, but he didn't answer. "What is it? Did she have twins*?" Roger asked.

"No, Mr. Button, there weren't any twins," replied the doctor with no emotion in his voice.

"Did she have triplets*?" Roger continued.

"Mr. Button, I'm not going to play guessing games with you. You can go and see for yourself, but first, please listen to me. I've been your family doctor for many years now. I knew your parents and I brought you into this world, too. Please believe me when I tell you this story could destroy my good name. If other people hear about it, it might ruin my reputation* and that of our hospital, perhaps forever."

Roger usually knew what to say, but today was different. He tried to speak, but he couldn't find the words.

"Listen to me carefully, Mr. Button," continued Dr. Keene. "I never want to see you, or any of your family, again. Good day!"

"I never want to see you, or any of your family, again," said Dr. Keene.



twins
תאומים / תואמן

triplets
שלישה / תלתה תואמן

ruin my reputation
להרוס לי את המוניטין / ידמר סמעתי