

Five Signs You Are Carrying Something You Have Never Named

For the man who does not think this applies to him.

Most men who need this do not think they need it.

That is not denial. That is what happens when you have been carrying something for so long that it has become indistinguishable from who you are.

Read the five signs below. Not for someone else. For yourself.

Sign One: You cannot explain the weight.

Not depression. Not a bad day. Something heavier and more structural. A weight that has been there so long you stopped noticing it, the way you stop noticing a sound that never stops.

You are functioning under it. You have always functioned under it. But it is there. And you know it is there, even if you have never said so out loud.

Sign Two: Your reactions do not match the situation.

The argument that escalated faster than it should have. The moment of shutdown that came from nowhere. The irritation that was disproportionate to what caused it.

These are not personality traits. They are the places where something unaddressed is pushing through the structure you have built to contain it.

Sign Three: You keep people at a measured distance.

You are present. You are capable of closeness. But there is a point beyond which you do not go. A line you do not cross. The people closest to you have probably felt it even if they have never found the words for it.

That line was not chosen. It was drawn a long time ago by something that needed to protect you.

Sign Four: You have never said the full thing out loud.

Not to anyone. You have said versions of it. The manageable version. The version that does not require the other person to actually hold anything too heavy.

The full version has never left the room it lives in.

Sign Five: You are watching something in yourself show up in the people around you.

This one stops most men.

The pattern. The way the person you love flinches, or shrinks, or manages around you. The way something you recognise from your own past is finding its way into the next generation.

You do not want it to continue. You do not know how to stop it.

That is exactly where The Silence begins.

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