

Ex-Husband's Regret by Evelyn M.M Chapter 21

Dinner date Ava I was a nervous wreck as I prepared for my date with Ethan. It's been two weeks since I was discharged from the hospital and I was all better. The doctor gave me the clear and I even gotten back to work a few days ago.

In the two weeks, a lot has changed. Letty and I have gotten closer and so has Ethan and I. He'd asked me out a couple of days ago. I had agreed whole heartedly.

Ethan was good for my ego. He made me laugh and relax. With him I was at ease. When I was around him I forgot about Rowan. I forgot about my broken heart.

"Hair up or down?" I ask Letty.

We were on video chat and she was helping me get ready.

If I was being honest, this is the first time I've ever gone out on a date. Like I mentioned before, I wasn't the kind of girl that boys asked out before.

When I was married, Rowan never took me out. In fact we never did the normal things couples did.

when they were in love. There was no dinner dates for me. It would be a surprise if Rowan even made it home for dinner most days.

"Definitely up, you have a beautiful long neck, you should flaunt it." Letty says pulling me out of my thoughts. "Ethan will definitely imagine kissing it and running his tongue down it the entire time." My cheeks color at the picture she painted. I was married for fucks sake, yet such a comment.

made me blush.

"I'm sure you're exaggerating" I mumble, trying to Hide my embarrassment.

"No I'm not. You're a beautiful woman and any man would be lucky to have you" "I'm not beautiful" I say automatically. It was sort of a knee jerk reaction.

I wasn't beautiful. I knew that. Hearing everyone tell you how beautiful your sister is, nails in that fact. It also didn't help that other parents used to tell my mother that I wasn't poised, elegant, neat or put together like Emma was "Yes, you are...you're the only one who doesn't see it. All you need is a confidence boost and I swear men will be scrambling and falling over themselves to have you" I put my hair up in a messy bun, with loose tendrils framing my face.

I really wanted to believe what she said, but it's hard to break years of beliefs Beliefs that were I sigh and push back the painful memories "If you say so" "I say so, now turn, I want to see how you look" she commands.

I didn't want to go all out incase things didn't go as planned, so I settled on a little black dress Something that I wasn't used to. Rowan never took me out when we were married so there wasn't any need to dress up.

I wore matching black heels and did a nude make up.

"You look amazing Ava, Ethan won't be able to take his eyes off you" Letty says with her jaw dropped.

"Thank you, Letty" I smile.

"I have to go, but I hope you have a wonderful time" she smiles kindly at me. "Let me know how the date goes" "I will and thanks again" We hang up just in time, because my door bell rings a second later.

Giving myself one last look, I take my purse and head downstairs. I open my door to find a smiling and dashing Ethan with a bouquet of flowers He cleaned up well and looked mighty fine in his black suit "You look beautiful, Ava" he stares at me as if seeing me for the first time.

"Thank you" I say softly, looking down.

As you've guessed, I'm not good at taking compliments. Especially from attractive men He lifts my chin with his finger before handing me the flowers. "These are for you" I sniff the roses feeling grateful. Rowan has never once bought me flowers. Hell, he has never treated me like I was important to him. In his mind, I was an inconvenience that he had a child with.

"Let me just put them in water and then we can leave" I turn around and head to the kitchen After putting the flowers in a vase, we leave I was both nervous and excited at the same time. I didn't know what to do or say. I mean what do you do during dates? What do you talk about? And who is supposed to start the conversation. I was so out of my element that I was afraid I was going to mess things up.

"Is it weird that I'm scared shitless, though I've gone on more dates than I can count?" Ethan asks, breaking the silence.

I laugh. Feeling relieved. The anxiety that had caged me fades away.

"Not at all...I was also hyperventilating. I've been nervous the whole day." I confess. "It made it hard to focus on my classes" Though my students were happy to have me back. They could tell that my mind was else where They even called me out on my abnormal behavior.

"I had to file a report repeatedly because I kept messing it up" he chuckles and I grin at him.

It eased my anxiety knowing that I wasn't the only one that was nervous.

We talk about how our days were and I couldn't help but think how easy things were between us.

This was how things should have been with Rowan. Instead he decided that the only one good enough was Emma. He decided that I didn't deserve a chance.

"We're here" Ethan says.

I look at the place where we had parked. The restaurant's name was familiar but I'd never eaten there before. I was also curious because it looked fancy.

"I heard the food here was great so I thought we could try it" he tells me as he turns off the engine.

Getting out, he rounded the car then came and opened the door. He helps me down and leads me inside. His hand at my lower back.

"Reservation for Ethan Anderson" Ethan asks the twenty something hostess.

She checks her list before speaking. "Right this way" As she leads us, she keeps throwing glances at Ethan. I don't blame her thought. Ethan looked good. Maybe if we were in a relationship, I would feel jealous but right now I didn't.

She settles us then leaves. A minute later, a waiter arrives with a bottle of wine. He then leaves with our orders after pouring us each a glass..

"So, how does a cop afford such a high end restaurant?" I wasn't being rude or anything. I was just curious.

This looks like the kind of place where Rowan had his business dinners.

Ethan chuckles before answering "You could say my parents are well off" "Parents?" I ask confused.

If I remember correctly, he told me his dad wasn't in the picture.

"Yes, my mother was a drug addict and she overdosed after I was born. When the FBI took out my dad, I was put into the system. I thought that was the end for me but it wasn't. A few months later I got lucky and got adopted by a really wonderful couple" I was mesmerized by him. The more I got to know him, the more I liked him.

"In other words, you're trust fund baby?" I joke making him laugh.

"You could say that but if we are being honest, then you're also a trust fund baby" he fires back at him.

I laugh but it's forced. How do I tell him he couldn't be anymore wrong without revealing how messed up my past was.

Sure, father was rich but when shit between me, Emma and Rowan went down, he cut me off completely. He took my trust fund and cut me off his will. According to him, I didn't deserve anything from him after what I did to his princess.

“So, what's the most exciting thing about your job?” I change the subject.

A smile lights up his face as he begins telling me about his job. Soon our food arrives and we dig in.

I try to focus but the more people start arriving, the more nervous I get. I try to relax and focus on Ethan but it doesn't work.

“Are you okay, Ava? You seem nervous?” he asks me slowly as if sensing my discomfort.

“Nervous?” I choke out “Yes, you're fidgeting and your eyes keep roaming” he tells me. “Aren't you enjoying yourself?” Show eye Gosh! I feel so bad now. Should I tell him the truth or would it ruin everything that was building between us. The last thing I wanted was to come off as an ungrateful bitch “You can tell me, I promise I won't be mad” his gaze pierces mine. It's like he can see the battle waging inside me.

“I do like your company and I'm enjoying being around you it's the scene that I'm uncomfortable.

with” I murmur truthfully.

“You mean the restaurant?” “Yes. I'm not used to all this.” There was a low chatter all around and everyone looked lively but I felt out of place. Like I didn't belong here.

“I'm sorry...I didn't think to ask, I just assumed that this is the kind of place you would want to “It's a lovely place but I would be more comfortable at a greasy diner than this fancy restaurant” He stares at me for a while before throwing down his napkin. At first I thought that he was pissed off. That he was going to walk away, but he surprises me.

He holds out his hands for me. “Well if that's what the lady wants that's exactly what she'll get” I search his eyes. Trying to see if he was playing me but I don't find anything that isn't genuine. I carefully place my hands in his. His warm fingers enclosing around mine.

“What about the remaining food?” I ask him.

“Don't worry about it” He leads him towards the door. When we're outside, I pull him to a stop.

“I'm sorry for ruining dinner and you don't have to do any of this. You can just drop me off at home” I still felt horrible.

He steps closer and pushes a piece of hair behind my ear before gently kissing my forehead.

“Don’t worry about it” he smiles. “Since we already ate, how about we go for ice cream? I know a good place” I smile wide at the mention of ice cream. Maybe this evening could be salvaged after all. Nodding at him in approval, he takes my hand, just as I feel eyes burning the side of my skull.

As we he walks me towards his car, I search for whoever it is that was looking at me.

I almost stumble when my eyes land on a familiar pair of grey eyes. Rowan was standing next to Emma, near the restaurant we just came from and he was glaring at me and Ethan.

There was a storm brewing behind his eyes. A very dangerous one.

Averting my eyes and shaking off the dangerous feeling his burning eyes evoked, I focus on my date.

I wasn’t doing anything wrong, and he had no right to seem angry when he was clearly on a date with Emma. I Ethan manages to pull me out of those looming thoughts. For the rest of our date, he gets me to forget about Rowan, even though there was still that underlying current in the atmosphere.

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A mess Rowan Today I was hoping to have a wonderful evening with Emma, but that was blown to shits when I saw Ava out on a date with Ethan.

“Rowan?” Emma calls me but I just can’t get my brain to function.

There, Ava stood in the arms of another man. At first I thought that my eyes were playing tricks on me. I had been happy because seeing Ethan out with another woman proved he was a weasel.

That was until I realized said woman was Ava She was stunningly beautiful. A sight I have never seen before. Her flawless skin was on display and the little black dress she had on showed her curves.

Sure I’ve seen her naked before but this sight hit me differently. She had dressed up, something she never did when we were together. Probably because I never asked her out and never bothered with her.

I watch as Ethan pushes a piece of her hair behind her ear. That gets my blood rushing, but not like watching him caress her cheek before kissing her forehead. Seeing him doing that has me seeing red She smiles at him. A smile that for an unknown reason almost brings me to my knees.

“Rowan, you’re hurting me!” Emma snaps.

It's only then that I realize that I had tightened my hand around her. I loosen it before turning in the direction of Ava. Our eyes collide but she quickly averts them, before stepping into Ethan's car.

I wanted to rage. To destroy something, someone actually. I wanted to hit Ethan to a bloody pulp. I was mad at him and at my reaction at seeing him with Ava Emma wrenches her arm from mine before stomping away angrily.

Before I can stop her, she hails a taxi and leaves.

I didn't understand my anger. Now more than anything I understood that there was something going on between Ava and Ethan. I hated it.

My mind was so fucking torn, and I was confused as shit. I know Emma didn't deserve this after all the shit I put her through, but also I didn't know how to explain why all of a sudden her sister affected me so much.

Getting in my car, I drive off and head towards her condo because I know that's where she'll be. It doesn't take me long before I'm parking outside her building.

She gave me a spare key, so I unlock the door and get in. I find her seated on the sofa, staring at nothing.

"Emma?" I call to her gently.

She turns to look. Her blue eyes red and puffy. I feel like an asshole. This is the woman I've loved since I understood what love is. Yet here I was hurting her, after promising never to do it again.

"What are you doing here?" she composes herself, Hiding away her pain.

"I'm fucking sorry for earlier..." "Are you?" she asks, her eyes piercing mine. "Do you know how painful it was to watch you pinning over my sister? How hard it was to watch you drool over her then get pissed off when you realized that she was out with another man" The guilt that eats at me is ravenous. Either way, I still couldn't help how I reacted to seeing Ava. I should have and I probably could have. Seeing her like that wasn't something I was prepared for.

"Emma..." she cuts me off and stands up She begins to pace, her hand gesturing wildly. Something she does when she's pissed but doesn't know how to deal with it.

"Did you fall in love with her during your marriage? Is that it? Then why the hell did you ask me to give you another chance if you knew very well that your love for me was already dead?" she demands.

"I'm not in love with, Ava" I growl out.

I think I would know if I were in love with her. 2 “Are you sure? Because from where I’m standing, the way you behave towards her suggests otherwise” “We were married, of course I care for her but that’s it” If that was the case, then why did I feel like I wanted to murder someone every time I think of Ava and any other man? I shake those thoughts away. I wasn’t ready to answer them “You’re a goddamn liar. You’re in love with her, just fucking admit it” she shouts angrily then proceeds to throw a book at me.

I dodge it just in time and it hits the wall behind me instead.

“Will you calm down and let me explain” I snap, feeling my temper rise.

“I don’t want your stupid explanation. It’s bound to be lies” she shrieks. “Just leave, Rowan I can’t deal with you right now.” She collapses on her sofa and continues staring at the blank Tv. I wanted to stay but I don’t think it is a good idea so I leave instead I had no direction as I drove My head was a fucking mess. Caught between two women. I know that Emma was hurting but I couldn’t bring my mind to focus on her wanted I now had everything I’ve ever wanted. Yet here was, ruining the fragile relationship I had with Emma Ava has always been unwanted. The wrong sister. So why the hell was she twisting me up all of a sudden? I hated being confused and that’s exactly what Ava was fucking doing to me.

I finally stop my car, only to realize I was parked outside Ava’s house. How I ended up here, I don’t fucking know Now that I was here, the need to see her consumed me. I felt like I would go crazy with the stupid need. One I didn’t even understand in the fucking place.

Getting out, I rush towards her door and knock urgently. Hoping that she was home.

“Did you forget something?” she opens her door and stops to look at me in surprise.

I bet I was the last person she expected to see at her door. I don’t give her the chance to speak before pushing her inside, locking the door and crashing my lips to hers I take her lips with a need that almost brings me down to my fucking knees. She gapes in shock and I take the opportunity to deepen the kiss. Feeling her in every damn fiber of my body.

Wrapping my hand around her tiny waist. I pull her closer, bridging the gap between us.

I needed more. I was about to lift her up and wrap her legs around my hips, when she pushes me Then she slaps me.

“What the hell, Rowan?” she screams. Her eyes are wide and her lips are swollen. She looked thoroughly devoured.

The slap she gave me brought me back to my senses. She looked as shocked and confused as I was. Without giving her answer, I open the door and stomp out. Banging the door behind me. I was beyond angry with myself.

I get back to my car and drive off. Still confused about what just happened.

Ava was right.

What the fuck was I doing? Because I sure as shit no longer knew.

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ot giving up Emma I haven't moved an inch since Rowan left I felt like the walls were closing in on me and I had no escape. No way to numb the pain I was feeling inside Everything hurt and I didn't even know how to stop it. I didn't know what to do or how to react Why was this happening to me? That's the question I keep asking myself, but there is no ansnes for it. There is no hint on why I was still going through shit even after getting the guys I feel the trickle of tears as they fall down my face. I hated being weak. I hated crying I rub the tears away angry at myself for letting them fall in the first place When daddy died, I was broken. I was his princess and he was my hero I didn't get to spend a lot of time with him because I moved to a different city, but when we did, it was awesome I thought I wouldn't recover his death. That there wasn't a bright side to it. Then Powan and I talked. He told me that he and Ava were divorced and asked if I could give us a chance I have been in love with him since I can remember. I never stopped loving him even after he broke my heart. My love for him kept burning throughout the nine years we were apart. That's how strong it was My family had kept me in the loop on things between Rowan and Ava. I knew that despite being married and no matter how Ava tried, Rowan kept her at a distance. He was cold to her and he never fell for her. He always asked after me. That his feelings for me were still obvious All these things considered, I didn't understand why right now he was all of a sudden interested in her life. Did my family miss something when it came to them? Something was just not adding up I stand up and start pacing I felt like I was going crazy with so many unanswered questions !

needed to talk to someone Someone who would help clear my doubts.

Picking up my phone, I call the one person that knows all there is to know about my life. She answers on the first ring "Hey, darling how is happily ever after treating you? she greets, excitement in her voice Molly has been my best friend since we started Uni She was my anchor and support system after everything went down with Rowan She was the one that helped pull me back together it wasn't for her pushing, I would have continued being depressed and failing my classes I owe my career to her "Not that great" I whisper sadly I thought that I would finally get my man. That everything was finally falling into place and I would soon have my dream. Instead here I am worrying and questioning everything.

"What do you mean? I thought everything was going great. Rowan asked you for another chance, didn't he?" she questions, her voice ringing in confusion.

She could join the club because I was just as confused as she was.

“They were, at first, but now I’m starting to doubt things. To doubt his feelings for me” . It makes my heart ache to think that everyone might have been wrong about his feelings. That at some point he might have developed some for Ava. I don’t know how I would survive if that ends up being the case.

“Tell me why you are in doubt and then we can work from there” she says softly and calmly.

I am one of the best lawyers. I study the facts before coming up with an attack plan. I make sure I am able to think clearly so that I can disable my enemies. Yet, when it comes to Rowan, everything I’ve learned is thrown out of the window.

“Rowan has been obsessive with Ava. He thinks I don’t know but for the past weeks, he’s been constantly checking on and calling her. He hired bodyguards for her, bought her a brand new car and hired someone to look after her” I never told him that I knew because I wanted him to tell me himself. I didn’t understand why he was doing all these things if he truly didn’t give a fuck about her. In my head, that was going beyond what’s normal for an ex-husband to do for his ex-wife.

“Why would he do all that? Did something happen to ‘she who shall not be named’ or something?” I can tell she’s puzzled. I can even imagine her brows pinched as tries to come up with an answer.

“Seems like she’s a target, she got shot during daddy’s burial and a couple of weeks ago, her car got blown up and she was injured” I tell her everything that happened “Personally, I think she did all these things to steal Rowan’s attention from me” I finish Like I said before, Ava isn’t anyone of importance to us, so why would anyone be after her?

Molly sighs, “If I were there, I would have smacked you Emma. You’re a damn lawyer and yet you want to believe your sister is capable of doing all that to herself just to get Rowan?” I “It’s because I’m a lawyer that I believe it. You can’t imagine what lengths women would go to, just to get the attention of their exes after said exes have moved on” I’ve had my share of serving ex-wives and girlfriends after they harmed others and their supposed loved one all in the name of winning back their men.

“People do crazy things when in love, and crazy is Ava’s middle name” I add.

When we were teenagers, Ava did everything and anything to get Rowan’s attention She even went as far as sabotaging our dates, ruining any diess I picked when I was going to meet Rowan and once she put green hair dye in my shampoo Those were just some of the tame things she did. She didn’t stop until she finally managed to break Rowan and I up.

“I’m not Ava’s biggest fan because of what she did to you, but I think she wouldn’t stoop that low... Besides, isn’t she the one that asked for the divorce?” Molly asks.

I go to tell her that it might have been a manipulative trick she used, but she doesn’t give me the chance to speak.

“I understand that you’re worried but Rowan has been married to Ava for nine years. They also have a son. He may not be in love with her but that doesn’t mean he doesn’t care for her. After what you’ve told me happened to Ava, it’s normal he would be worried and want to look after her” She made sense, but I still couldn’t help feel that something is just not right with him.

I get that, but that’s not my worry. My concern is how he behaves when he sees her with another.

man. There is this cop called Ethan and he’s sniffing around Ava. The two times we saw them together, Rowan’s behavior was volatile. He almost broke my hand today after he saw Ethan and Ava standing really close outside a restaurant” I tell her feeling completely defeated.

She’s quiet for some time, while I try my best to drown the pain I felt today. You have no idea how fucking hurtful it is to see the man you love, completely pissed at seeing the woman who broke us up, with another man.

“Define volatile” Molly demands.

“He looked possessed. Like he was about to blow. The only reason he would behave like that, is if he was possessive of her. To be possessive in that manner, means you have deep feelings.

Feelings that go beyond just caring about someone simply because she’s the mother of your kid” i tell her I don’t want to think of that possibility, but I also can’t help myself. Could it be really possible that he was in love with her and didn’t even know it?

“Look, I don’t know what to say because this shit is complicated. From where I’m standing you have two options, you can either give him up or fight for him. There is no way everyone was wrong when they said he was still pinning over you” I don’t even think twice when I answer. “I’m fighting for him. Ava ruined us once and took away nine years of our lives. I won’t let her do that again” Molly lets out a breath. “I was afraid you would say that, but Emma..” she inhales. “If that’s the case, then you’ll have to come clean. You’ve kept it a secret for so long that you’ve started fooling yourself into believing it. No great relationship is built off of lies” t I hate that she was reminding me of what I was yet to tell him. I knew she was right but I didn’t know if it was the right move.

Pretending was better than acknowledging the truth. I knew if they ever found out, they would loose their respect for me. They would realize that I wasn’t perfect. I couldn’t have that, because being perfect is the only advantage I had over Ava.

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He's hurting Ava I'm still reeling from Rowan's actions a couple of days ago. I don't get what the hell has the inte him. Was he trying to jeopardize his relationship with Emma? Did he want to get me trouble with her?

She already thought that I was out to get her man That I was doing everything can to take hu away from her. What she didn't understand is that I just wanted peace I didn't want Rowan I've been there, tried that and learned my lesson the hard way.

"Are you sure about that?" an annoying little voice asked me. "You can't deny that you liked the kiss. That's how you always imagined him kissing you. With nothing but want and passion" I shake the thought away. It was wrong. I was determined to move on from Rowan and find a life and love of my own. Just because my body betrayed me didn't mean anything. My re pons- was purely biological. There was nothing more to it "Keep lying to yourself" the voice argued I wasn't lying to myself. Or maybe I was, bottom line is I wasn't going to read into Rowan uncharacteristic behavior or his unexpected kiss.

Pushing thoughts of Rowan completely to the back of my mind, I focus on the door to the coffee shop. It was five and I had just gotten out of work. Letty and I had made plans to meet up before going home.

I take a bite of my cake just as the door opens and Letty walks in. Her eyes searches the sea of people before finally landing on me. She rushes towards me, a smile on her face.

"I'm so sorry I'm late, we had a last minute meeting at the office" she says as she takes a seat opposite me. (O I smile back at her. "It's okay. No worries" "I see you've already ordered" she points out.

"I missed lunch so I was a bit hungry" She nods her head before making her order. When that's done, she turns and faces me. Giving me her full attention.

O "So tell me, how did your date with Ethan go?" If I'm being honest, Letty has come to mean a lot to me in the short time we've known each other. She is the best friend I never knew I needed. The one I never got to have in high school because I was too obsessed with getting Rowan to notice me.

"It went really well" I tell her shyly.

Her face lights up and a grin takes over. "Tell me everything" "There isn't much to tell, Letty. We went to dinner at this fancy restaurant and then he took me out for ice cream. Which was my favorite part of the night" "Did he kiss you?" excitement was written all over her face I chuckle at that. It's like nothing else I said to her registered. All she wanted to know is how the night ended.

"No." I tell her. "I could tell he wanted to, but he didn't. I don't know whether I am still disappointed by that or not" "Why?" "Because part of me wanted him to do it, just to know how it feels to be kissed by someone who actually wants me, but the other part was glad he didn't kiss

me because I'm not sure whether I'm ready for that yet" She keeps quiet and just stares at me. I see the wheels in her mind turning as she thinks about what I just told her.

"You're telling me that Rowan has never kissed you?" she asks, a frown marring her beautiful face.

"He has, but not like he meant it. I saw him kiss Emma when we were younger. It was passionate and heated. Like he couldn't get over the taste of her lips on his. Like he could do it over and over again." I take a breath. "He has never kissed me like that" I avoid her eyes because I don't want her to see my shame. This is the first time I'm telling anyone this. I've hidden the broken pieces of my marriage to Rowan in my heart for so long. Not wanting anyone to know just how much his actions destroyed me.

"He did kiss you like that last Friday" that same annoying voice reminds me.

That was just a fluke. It didn't mean anything. Besides it can't erase all the times I wanted him to
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much as he could, and that always hurt me like you wouldn't believe That my husband found me so unattractive that he didn't even want to kiss me. Even when we had sex, he would kiss anywhere except my lips.

"You deserve to be kissed like the world is going to end in the next minute" Letty's words pull me out of my head. She has my hand in hers, offering me support and comfort.

I look at her and sigh in relief. She wasn't looking at me with pity or sympathy That was the last thing I needed from her "So, apart from that, everything else was perfect?" she asks "Yes, I did see Rowan and Emma though Looked like they were out on a date" "You're serious?" "Yes" I answer taking a sip of my drink Trying to forget how perfect they looked together Emma was right. She and Rowan just made sense Everyone saw it then and finally I'm beginning to see it now, "Well, I hope he saw how freaking gorgeous you were and I hope it sinks in that he let go of a true beauty" I laugh. I told you Letty was good for my ego For once there was another human being who wasn't obsessed with how beautiful Emma was Finally, someone who wasn't comparing me to my sister or rubbing her beauty in my face.

"So that's it? Nothing else interesting happened?" she asks "Nope" I shake my head.

I wanted to tell her about Rowan's visit, but I stop myself. Don't get me wrong. I trusted her but sometimes people slip up and say things they aren't supposed to say.

The last thing I wanted is Emma ever finding out that Rowan came to my house after their date.

Worst of all, that he kissed me We settle after that and our conversation flows easily, but I noticed that something was eating at her.

"Okay, what's wrong?" I push my glass and plate aside.

“Nothing” she answers averting her eyes.

“Spill it, Letty” I command.

There’s a battle waging inside her mind. Immediately I know that I wasn’t going to like what she says. If she chooses to tell me, that is. 2 “It’s about Travis, he really is sorry” I mentally shake myself. I should have just kept my mouth shut and minded my own damn business.

“We’re not going to go there” the words leave through clenched teeth.

Letty sighs. “Please, Ava. It’s tearing him apart that you want nothing to do with him. That you were hurt and he couldn’t even be there for you. He’s hurting” “He’s hurting? Do you know how many years I’ve been hurting? Do you know how many painful things he’s said and done to me? He wants me to forgive him yet he never forgave me for hurting his precious sister. He told me I was dead to him. That he only had one sister, do you know how painful it was to hear him say that? Or to have him taunt me that Rowan will never love me because Emma was his everything and I was nothing?” I was trying to move on yet they kept dragging me back. Once again, his pain comes before mine. No one cared that they hurt me and tore me down, yet he expects me to forget my pain and forgive him. It wasn’t going to happen.

I stand up and pick up my bag, already in a foul mood.

“If he can reverse the pain he gave me, then I might just forgive him. Until then we have nothing to talk about” I see the tears swimming in her eyes but I ignore them and walk away. She calls my name but I don’t turn back. 1 I hail a cab and get in just as she gets outside. I refuse to look at her as the cab drives off.

I fight back the tears that threaten to fall. I wasn’t going to be weak anymore. I wasn’t going to fall back to feeling sad for myself. That chapter of my life is over. I was now going to focus on creating a new life for myself.

We get home and I pay the taxi driver. Thankful that I was home. In my safe space.

I walk to my door and I was about to open my door when a chill runs down my back. I felt like I was being watched. I turn around to look at the street but there was nothing out of the ordinary.

A neighbor three door down was walking her dog. Cars were driving past my house on their way to their homes. A couple of people were on their evening jogs.

I turn back around, unlock my door and get inside. All the while still feeling the chilling and menacing stare on my back.

Ex-Husband’s Regret by Evelyn M.M Chapter 25

Attacked I had just finished cleaning up when my phone rang. For some reason, I always find cleaning relaxing. It's a way for me to take my mind off what's stressing me out.

Since I was back on my feet and could fend for myself, I let Lydia go. She was a great help, but I didn't need a nurse anymore. Plus I preferred to be independent.

I cross the room and pick up my phone. For a moment, I'm tempted to hang up when I see Letty's name flashing. I was still a bit pissed at her but a part of me also understood her. I would also do anything for the man I loved, including trying to bring him and his estranged sister together.

"Hey" I answer walking up to my room.

"I'm so sorry, Ava. I crossed the line even after I made a promise to never speak about Travis" the emotion in her voice caught me off guard.

She sounded genuine and a little bit sad. I was surprised and I didn't know what to do. I wasn't used to people apologizing to me and actually meaning it. As a matter of fact, none of those around me has ever apologized when they wronged me.

"Letty..." She cuts me off before I can finish. "You were right. We can't expect you to just forget. To just pretend like he hasn't hurt you for years. No amount of remorse from him is enough to erase the emotional pain he put you through. I love him, God, do I love him, but my love can't blind me to his faults and his awful treatment of his own sister. You're a beautiful soul and yet he crushed you with his cruelty so how can I ask you to just forgive him years of mistreatment? It wouldn't be fair. Our friendship has come to mean a lot to me and I don't want to ruin it" I sigh. Already feeling tired and emotionally drained. It would be so much easier to just forget and move on, but that's the thing about being hurt. It's never easy to forget about it. I They say that time heals all wounds. I say that it's all crap. This kind of pain stays with you for life. You simply find a way to co-exist with it or to numb it. The wound inflicted doesn't always completely heal.

"Look, Letty, I get where you're coming from and I get how hard it must be for you. I like being you friend, I really do, but I also don't want to cause any problems between you and Travis. The last thing I want and need is Travis hating me more than he already does" 1/4 "He doesn't hate..." This time I'm the one that interrupts her. "Please let's not go there. He has made it clear multiple times that he does and I accepted that a long time ago" I mean, it's easy to get used to it when your family, husband and in laws hate you. It hurt like a bitch but I got used to it and made peace with it.

She lets out a breath before speaking. "I don't want our friendship to end, okay? I'll just have to find a way to keep both relationships separate from each other" I don't see how that will work. She's bound to get tired and give up. It's hard to stand in the middle of two people you treasure but don't see eye to eye.

I go to tell her exactly that when my phone vibrates with another incoming call. I smile. Feeling like my old self since everything went down with Letty a couple of hours ago.

“I’ve got to go, Letty. Noah is calling and I want to talk to him before he goes to sleep” I let her know, eager to talk to my son.

“Sure, I understand” she pauses. “We’re okay though? I swear I’ll keep my promise and won’t mention Travis again” “Yeah, we’re okay. Don’t worry about it” I tell her, meaning every word.

“Thanks” she says excitedly. “I’ll let you have your time with Noah. Tell him I said, Hello, and have a goodnight” “You too, Letty” I hang up the phone and take a deep breath. Since Noah had already hanged up, I call him back.

“Hello?” I freeze at the sound of mother’s voice coming from the other side.

I haven’t talked to her since that day at the airport. Among all the people who hurt me, hers hurt more. A mother is supposed to love and cherish her kids, yet I got nothing from my own mother. I mean how could she just turn her back on me? How could she treat me like I was nothing?

Now that I have my own child, I can’t understand how she was able to do it. I can’t ever imagine turning my back on Noah.

“Ava, how are you?” she asks softly, her voice trembling a little.

2/4 Nothing comes out of my lips. I remain mute. Not because I have nothing to say to her, but because I have so much to say and neither of it is good. I’d rather keep quiet than say something I can’t take back. O “Please say something? Anything...I just want to hear your voice” she whispers, her voice thick.

I still don’t say anything. My throat clogs with emotion. This is the mother I always wanted. A few years back, hell a few months back, I would have jumped at this opportunity, but it’s too late now.

“I know you don’t want to talk to me, so I’ll just put Noah on the phone. Just know that I love you, Ava” 2 I didn’t mean to, but I scoff at her words. If what she’s shown me my entire life is love, then I don’t want it. I’ve seen firsthand what her kind of love can do and I want nothing to do with it.

I hear her call out to Noah and soon enough, my boy is on the phone with me.

“Hi, Mommy” he says. This time though he isn’t his usual excited self.

“What’s wrong?” i ask with concern “Nothing, I just miss you so much. It’s fun being here but I want to come home, when can I come home?” His sadness kills me. I wanted him home more than anything, but his safety comes first.

I was about to answer when I heard a crash downstairs. I sit up on my bed.

“Noah, let me check something downstairs then I’ll call you back” I tell him distractedly.

He answers with an okay and then hangs up. Once he does, I grip my phone and head downstairs. I wanted to believe that it wasn’t anything. That maybe a cup fell or something stupid like that, but I couldn’t.

Grabbing a vase, I tip toe down stairs towards where I heard the noise. My heart stops for a second when I see the broken glass of my back door, which was now open. Someone had just broken into my house and deep down I knew it wasn’t just a common burglar. 3 Jerkily, I pull my phone out about to call the police, but I don’t get a chance before someone hits me on the head.

“This time, I’ll make sure you’re dead” I hear an unfamiliar voice say right before I fall to the ground.

