

Ex-Husbands Regret Chapter 381 -390

Ex-Husbands Regret Chapter 381-Harper.

“This is so cool!” Lilly screamed as we stepped into Gabriel’s private jet.

I don’t say anything. I just looked around the spacious area. It is cool, as Lilly put it, and I did admire it, but there was no way I was going to admit that in front of Gabriel’s arrogant ass.

“I can’t believe we get to ride on a private jet... My friends will totally be jealous when I tell them.” She continued to gush as I just stared at her.

Being here felt so surreal. Seeing the signs of wealth all around the spacious space, brought back so many memories that I’d tried forgetting.

It’s been so long since I was last in a private jet. I remember the last time I ever used a private jet was a few months before my dad took over the company as CEO.

I loved my father, but he was just not meant to lead anyone. Especially a multi million dollar company. He ran it to the ground within a year of taking charge of it. Because of the bad decisions he made and his bad leadership, Unity Ventures lost contracts worth millions and acquired a lot of debt.

We had to sell everything we had. Cars, private jets, our yacht, and properties.

Eventually, we had to sell the house we lived in. Even then, it still wasn’t enough to settle the debts the company had accrued. Daddy was a good man; he was ambitious, but he was terrible at doing business. So many times I heard the board talking to him and asking him to step down, but he refused. His pride wouldn’t let it, and in the end, it became our downfall.

Mom had been the only child of my grandparents, hence the heiress. I believe she would have done an exceptional job at leading the company. After all, Grandpa had trained her himself since she was old enough to read and write.

The problem was that Dad loved the company, and Mom loved my dad. She did everything to make him happy, and that included handing over the family legacy to him even though she knew he wasn’t capable.

Dad was also stubborn. He refused to take advice from anyone because he thought he knew better. That his plans were better. If only he had listened, maybe Andrew would still be alive right now. “Mom”

I looked down to find Lilly shaking my hand.

“What?”

“You haven’t answered me... Have you ever been on a private jet before?”

Lilly doesn’t know anything about my past. She doesn’t know that our family was once influential. Hell she doesn’t even know that this isn’t where I was born or that I had a family.

She’s tried asking about it a couple of times, but I always brushed it off. It’s not that I hated my family; it’s just too painful to talk about them. To talk about Andrew, her uncle, who I used to love more than anyone.

I also don’t like talking about them because a part of me blames my parents for Andrew’s death.

Feeling the familiar pain, I pull myself back from the heartbreaking memories and nod my head.

“Yes, but it was a long time ago,” I replied, unable to stop the catch in my voice.

She stared at me, her intense gaze penetrating my soul. I loved her eyes, but I also hated them because when she stared at me like that, it used to remind me of Gabriel. He was also a part of the painful past I didn’t want to remember.

“Okay, let’s get settled,” Gabriel said behind me. He was so close that I could feel his warm breath on the back of my neck.

Lilly’s eyes shifted between the two of us, but she didn’t say anything. I know my daughter and I know she’s trying to figure out who Gabriel is to me.

She finally turns towards him and asks, “Can I sit anywhere I want?”

“Sure”

After Gabriel answers, she squeals and leaves in search of the perfect seat.

She finally decides on a window seat at the front. She sits down and buckles up.

I smiled at her excitement.

This isn’t the first time we’ve been on a plane, but it’s the first time she’s been on a private jet, so it’s obvious she’ll be excited. We used to take vacations once a year, after Liam and I had saved our asses to be able to afford them. We’d always fly economy, so this was a new experience for her.

“Are you going to move, or am I going to drag you to your seat?” Gabriel’s voice, dripping with arrogance, cuts through my happy bubble.

I just glared at him before taking a seat. To my annoyance, instead of taking another seat, he took the one right next to me.

After buckling up, he turns to face me, and I have to keep reminding myself of the reasons why I hate him. He is a devilishly handsome man, and he knew how to wield his looks against women.

Even back then, when he was in his twenties, he still had women falling at his feet. He was good-looking, but in a boyish kind of way. It’s different now that he’s in his thirties. He is now all male and oozes nothing but pure sex appeal.

“Harper?” His deep voice penetrated my fog.

“What?”

“I asked, how does it feel to be back in the lap of luxury after a long time?” he asked arrogantly. “You see, I’m doing you a favor. I bet it wasn’t easy scrapping by and living like a house rat.”

Yeah, the warm feelings I had seconds ago have definitely now vanished. His vanity and insult are a slap back to reality. He may have a face like the Greek gods, but his personality is rotten to the core. I must have been stupid and blinded to have fallen in love with him.

I take a calming breath, “It’s sad that money has given you luxuries but has done nothing to improve your personality. The fact that you’re insulting me to make yourself feel better says a lot about you. It’s been said that bullies bully others because they suffer from low self-esteem and an inferiority complex.

Could it be that you’re trying to compensate for something?”

I smiled sweetly as I watched his jaws clench. Fury replaces the smug look he had minutes ago and damn, does it make me feel good to get under his skin.

“Why you...” he goes to say, but he gets cut off by the pilot announcing that we’re about to take off.

I can feel his annoyance, and it’s like a sweet aroma.

Bring it on, Gabriel. You’ll soon discover that I’m no longer the weak lamb that bowed to you. You push and I’ll push right back.

Ex-Husbands Regret Chapter 382-Staring outside through the window, I tried to ignore the imposing man next to me. My mind was on everything that was awaiting me in the country where I was born. When I left everything and everyone I knew behind, I thought I would never return.

I'm not ashamed to say that I was not planning to let Gabriel know he had fathered a child. Don't look at me like that, I had my reasons, and I know you've already guessed some of them.

Lilly was a secret I planned to take to my grave. Apart from her unique grey eyes, she looked like me and nothing like her father. Only people who knew the

Woods would guess from her eyes that she was one of them... And what was the chance of meeting their acquaintances when I was no longer part of that world?

As much as soap operas try to romanticize things, the truth is that the rich rarely mingle with the poor. Most of them have a stick up their asses and consider them low-class. It's sad to say that my parents were also like that, but Andrew and I weren't. Thanks to our house manager, Mia. She partly raised us since, most of the time, my parents were out of the country on business. She's the one who taught us to never look down on others and to always be kind.

I feel a pang when I remember her. She was like a second mother to me. Just like with everyone else, life took her away from me a few months before I turned seventeen. I know fate hates me, but sometimes think she cursed me, otherwise, why is it that almost everyone I cared about and loved is dead?

Pushing those thoughts away, I focused on the scenery below me. Dwelling on them will just make me bitter with life. I can't allow that, not when I still have Lilly.

She's my happiness and peace.

"When did it happen?" his voice pulled me back, making me turn towards him.

"When did what happen?" I was confused about what he was asking. It was evident in my voice.

"Lilly," he simply stated.

My breath hitched when it finally dawned on me what he was asking. This is another thing I never thought I would talk about. Mostly because I am embarrassed. I do love Lilly with all my heart. I'm just embarrassed by how she was conceived.

"I don't remember ever sleeping with you," he murmured.

I sucked air into my lungs. There was no point in hiding it. He already knew of Lilly's existence, so there was no point in not telling him.

"I'm not surprised that you don't, you were drunk," I told him, unable to look into his eyes.

"So you're saying you took advantage of me when I was drunk?"

I scoffed at that. As if anyone would ever take advantage of Gabriel Wood. It was ridiculous.

"No, I didn't." I began. "It had been Noah's birthday, and you left in the afternoon to attend. Do you remember that?"

I didn't know much about Rowan, his twin. All I knew was that he'd gotten his girlfriend's sister pregnant and married her. I heard rumors that Rowan treated her like trash and my heart went to her because we were both in the same boat.

We were married to twin brothers who, for some reason, detested us.

I wasn't friends with Ava growing up, but I know for sure she wasn't loved. It was in the snide remarks you would hear her mother and grandparents saying about her and to her during social functions. I always felt sorry for her. So many times I wanted to approach her and befriend her, but I was scared. She always gave off a 'Don't come near me' vibe.

"Yes"

Of course, I was hurt that he didn't take me with him. I knew he didn't want his family to know and that hurt more than anything.

"Well, I was getting ready to sleep when you came home. It was around eleven.

You shouted my name, and I thought that something was wrong, so I rushed down, only to find you leaning against the kitchen counter.

You basically commanded me to come to you, and when I did, you grabbed and kissed me. I was confused, since you've never touched me before, so I asked you if you were drunk. I tasted it on you but I wanted confirmation. You told me you only had a little bit and I believed you because you didn't seem drunk. You were even standing normally."

Ex-Husbands Regret Chapter 383-Taking a deep breath, I tried to separate myself from the memories of that night.

It had been the best night of my life, but what followed after nearly destroyed me.

“I asked you who you had drunk with. You told me it was Rowan. You then told me how you were hurting seeing your brother so broken and hurt. How it destroyed you that you couldn’t help him. You couldn’t give him what his heart desired, which was Emma.

We continued talking, but then you kissed me again. This time, you didn’t stop.

You told me that you wanted to forget, even if it was just for the night. You said that you’d wanted me for a long time, and you could no longer stay away from me.

You even carried me out of the kitchen and took me to your bedroom. Not once did you stumble, so it confirmed to me that you weren’t drunk and that you really did want me. I should have known not to trust your lying tongue,” I finished.

The next morning, I woke up earlier than him and decided I was going to make him breakfast. After I was done, I went back to the room to wake him up and give him a glass of water.

I was surprised when he shouted at me, asking me what the hell I was doing in his room. I was in a tiny nightgown and I remember him telling me to stop being so desperate. He’d thought I was there to seduce him.

“I know you remember this next part. You told me that even if I were the last woman on earth, you would never stick your dick in me. You said that I should stop being desperate for your cock because I would never have it.

That you’d rather cut off your balls than sleep with me. It dawned on me that you had been drunk the previous night; you were just good at coordinating yourself even when drunk. I almost had a heart attack when it hit me that you didn’t remember a damn thing.”

After his hurtful words, I didn’t say a thing. I just turned around, walked out and went to my room. I cried for nearly three hours. I was broken and hurt. Who knew words could be wielded like a deadly weapon? Two weeks after that, my heart was shattered to more pieces when I got the news that Andrew had passed away. A week after that news, Gabriel divorced me and a day after my brother’s burial, I left the country.

“How long was it before you realized you were pregnant?” he asked. Until this point, he had been silent.

“About four months,” I sighed. “I wasn’t in a good place after I left the country. I was still mourning my brother and my failed marriage. I tried committing suicide.

It’s a miracle that Lilly survived. It was as they were performing tests that they discovered I was pregnant.”

With everything that had happened, I didn't realize that I was pregnant. Lilly had been my saving grace. It was because of her that I held on, when all I wanted was to leave this world behind. She grounded me and she became my lightning rod, anchoring me to this world.

"Why didn't you tell me? You could have called and told me." His anger was visible as his eyes darkened to a stormy shade.

I was about to answer him when the intercom came on.

"This is the pilot speaking, we are about to land. Please fasten your seat belts."

I guess the answer to his last question will have to wait.

I was back home after almost a decade away. Something told me that things were about to get messy, and I don't think I'm ready for the chaos that being back here is going to unleash.

Ex-Husbands Regret Chapter 384-I held on to the seat's armrest as the plane touched down. A certain panic overcomes me as I think of what will be awaiting me. What will be waiting for me and Lilly.

It continues to rise as I think of introducing her to the life I left behind years ago.

The panic grips me as I imagine the questions she'll have. Not only about my past, but also about Gabriel. I almost pass out when I think of how I'll answer those questions.

I know I've hidden a lot from her. That's what worries me. That she won't understand and that she'll get mad when she realizes just how many secrets

I've kept from her.

"Breathe, Harper... Breathe."

I hear his voice slowly whispering in my ear. I hold on to it as I try to fight my way away from the fog and darkness.

"Is she okay?"

My sweet daughter asks. Her voice tinged with worry.

"I think she's having a panic attack," Gabriel replies gently.

The worry in Lilly's voice forces me to pull myself together. It pushes me to come back and overcome the panic that was threatening to drown me. I couldn't let her see me fall

apart. Not when we were miles away from home and everyone here was a stranger to her.

“Mom?”

Pushing the last of my panic down, I open my eyes. I find her worried ones staring at me.

Giving her a smile, I try to assure her. “I’m fine, Honey. Stop worrying, I just got a little bit anxious.”

Her gaze shifts from mine to Gabriel’s and then back to mine. She nods her head, but I can see she doesn’t fully believe me. She has loads of questions and is just waiting for the perfect time to ask. “Good then... Let’s fu- leave then,”

Gabriel said, catching himself in the process before he could curse.

I undo my seat belt and then stand. He gestures for us to follow him and we do.

In that moment, I felt like a lamb being led to the slaughterhouse. My anxiety is still there. Still dancing on the edge of the surface.

I was about to get out of the plane when I remembered something and stopped, making Lilly bump me from behind.

“Ouch, seriously, mom? Why did you stop?” she asked, but I was just frozen.

Gabriel, hearing her, turns his head.

“What is it now?” His irritation was very, damn well clear in his voice.

“What about the paparazzi?”

I whispered and looked behind me. I didn’t want Lilly get a hint of what’s going on. Luckily, she was too busy rubbing her nose to catch what I’d just asked.

“Don’t worry about them; my people have already taken care of that,” he answered. “I’m not ready for word about Lilly getting out yet.”

Sighing in relief, I nod my head.

Satisfied, Gabriel turns around and gets out. We follow close behind.

Once outside, the heat hits me. Damn it, this was the one thing I didn’t miss about this country. It was almost always hot. It was almost evening, but the sun was still scorching

hot. It would take some time to get used to it again, because when I fled, I went to a cooler region.

Shielding my eyes from the sun, I continue following Gabriel. He stops besides a black car. His driver, whose name I'd already forgotten, was standing beside it too, with the back door open.

I stepped aside to let Lilly get in first, and her mouth was wide open. The girl loved cars, so she probably knew which model this one was and how much it cost.

"No way!" she almost screamed in excitement. "This is a Maybach, a Mercedes Maybach S-Class to be exact... Sweet, my friends are going to be even more jealous."

She continues to study it in awe and I steal a quick glance from Gabriel. He looks impressed with Lilly. After all, that is one of the things I know they share.

Their love for cars.

I'm surprised, too. Not because of the car, but because Gabriel gives her time to study his car before gently asking her to get in.

It honestly surprises me. This is a side of him I never knew existed. A side of him I don't want to know exists. You're wondering why, but it's simple. If this gentle side of him exists, then it just glaringly points to the fact that he did truly hate me. That was the reason why he treated me so fucking poorly when we were married, and not because it was his character or personality.

Ex-Husbands Regret Chapter 385-Pushing the thoughts away, I get in and Gabriel follows next. After his driver get in, he starts the car, and soon we are off.

"Sir, are you rich?" Lilly's voice cuts through the awkward atmosphere.

"Lilly," I admonish. "You're not supposed to ask people such personal questions."

One thing you'll learn about my daughter is that she has no filter. She'll speak her mind; everyone else be damned. She doesn't care if she crosses a line, as

long as she get it off her chest and mind Instead of getting angry or irritated like he should, Gabriel just chuckles before asking, "Why do you ask?"

She shrugs. "Because one, you have a private jet that costs anywhere from two million dollars to one hundred, then there is your car, which is around two hundred thousand dollars, and let's not forget your suit, watch, and shoes. From their material alone, you can tell they're expensive."

Lilly does know her numbers. Apart from cars, her other hobby is watching business channels and reading business magazines. Her favorite is the accounting section.

I noticed this when she was around five years old. Her sharp intelligence and love for anything numerical. I didn't want to let her down and waste her potential.

It's why I broke my back to make sure she went to a good school.

Gabriel's small and deep laugh makes me turn to him. There was something akin to pride shining in his eyes. It's almost like his eyes were speaking the words his mouth couldn't.

I know how he feels. I struggled with this a lot, even though I was proud of her.

She shared a lot with her dad. In addition to the cars, they also shared their love for numbers.

"You could say that," came his reply minutes later.

"I also want to be rich when I grow up," she began. "Like filthy rich. That way, I can give Mama a good life."

Just hearing her say that warms my heart... And the fact that she called me mama made my heart melt into a mushy goo. She hasn't called me that in a long time. Once she hit six years old, she transitioned from calling me mama to mom.

Gabriel turns to me, but I ignore his stare. From the corner of my eyes, I see him nod, and then we all get quiet.

"Are we staying with you?" Lilly fired again after a while, making me groan in embarrassment.

I did want to ask Gabriel that, given the contract, but I didn't want to ask within Lilly's hearing range.

"Yes, I have a penthouse where we will all be staying for a while," he replied. "In fact, we are almost there."

"Final question: are you mom's boyfriend? Are you going to marry her?"

"Lilly!"

Gosh, this girl. What was I going to do with her?

Lilly turns to me, then back to Gabriel when he begins speaking.

“First of all, those are two questions, and second of all, yes, I’m going to marry your mother.”

Her pink lips broadened in a wide smile at his answer. “Good. She’s been lonely since Papa died.”

I’m sure my cheeks are flaming red. I can’t believe that she would say that so confidently in front of Gabriel... Then again, why am I so surprised?

I’m totally embarrassed. Gabriel was the last person I wanted, knowing just how lonely I am.

Lilly was about to open her mouth, when the car stops. I breathe a sigh of relief and thank the heavens. The last thing I wanted was for her to reveal even more embarrassing things about me. The door opens and Gabriel’s driver helps us out. Lilly and I stand there for a while, admiring the tall and imposing building.

“Jared will let you in and show you your rooms,” Gabriel says from behind me.

I turn to find him out of the car. What surprised me, though, was that he was seated in the driver’s seat.

“Aren’t you coming with us?” I asked, fumbling with my hands.

His grey eyes pin me to the spot. “No, and don’t wait up for me.”

With that, he speeds away, leaving us with a stranger.

“This way, madam,” Jarred says, taking our luggage.

I give the car one last look before following Jarred to the entrance.

I know where Gabriel is going. He cheated on me during our marriage multiple times. He was probably heading to one of his many mistresses.

What bothered me, though, is that that thought send a pang of hurt through my heart. I didn’t understand why.

It’s been years, shouldn’t I be over it?

Ex-Husbands Regret Chapter 386-Gabe.

I sped away from my apartment building with no idea where the hell I was going.

I just knew that I needed to be away from them. I needed the distance. I needed to think and pull myself together. I can’t do that when I’m around both of them.

My mind is racing. I can barely think straight, and it's been driving me crazy the entire time.

When I found out about Lilly, I didn't really think much about her being my kid.

She was just another being that existed. Just a stranger that was related to me.

Seeing her and interacting with her brought home the fact that she indeed was my kid.

Her eyes were a dead giveaway, but her mannerism surprised me even more. I thought that I wouldn't be able to find someone so similar to me and my brother, but I was dead wrong. Lilly reminded me so much of myself that it was uncanny.

I couldn't fucking believe it.

Harper tried to sush her so many times, but Lilly is a Wood through and through.

She had to learn that there was just no way you could shut us up. If we want to say what's on our mind, we damn well will, everybody be damned.

"Siri, call Rowan," I said into the space.

"Calling Rowan," the handset replied.

I need my brother right now. Maybe he could shed some light on what I was supposed to do. I was out of my element here, and it was scaring the crap out of me.

I'm usually one to think things through, but with this one, I didn't. I admit that I was fucking desperate when I went looking for Harper and Lilly. I was focused on saving what I'd worked for all these years. Not once did I consider what it would be like once I got them here with me.

Harper I could deal with. I've done it before. I know how to control her, even if something deep inside me tells me that she isn't the same girl she used to be.

Lilly, on the other hand, is different. I had no idea what to do with her or how to handle her.

"Yeah?" came Rowan's rough voice through the speaker.

"Can we meet up?"

I knew he was home. He and Ava had come back from their honeymoon a week ago. I know that I'll have to tell him the truth, but I don't mind. He's my twin, and I trust him with my life. "Where and when?" he asked.

That's the thing about having a twin brother. They can sense when you need them and when you're not okay. They will be there for you, no questions asked.

"Meet me at Havana, I'm heading there right now," I answered. "I'm about twenty minutes away."

"I'll be there in a few."

The call ends and I focus on driving.

Shit! This was much harder than I'd anticipated. My mind goes back to how she asked her questions confidently. How she knew prices of things children her age didn't. Even the way she spoke and how she carried herself were similar. She was a mini-me and that scared me.

I was planning to just marry Harper and then live separately from them. I didn't consider Lilly. Honestly, I didn't think about anyone but my fucking self. Now, though, I know Harper won't let me off the hook. She loves Lilly, and she won't let anyone hurt her, not even me.

Lilly, on the other hand, won't allow herself to be ignored or pushed aside. She'll demand more from me, especially when she finds out that I'm her father.

Mindlessly, I got to the exclusive club and parked my car in the reserved parking area. This is one of the many clubs I own.

Getting out, I ignore the countless groupies who call me, trying to get free entry into the club. My bodyguards slightly bowed to me before allowing me to pass through.

I immediately head to the VIP section and as soon as I am seated, a waiter comes rushing to take my order.

"Mr. Wood, what can I get you?" His voice was shaky as he asked.

I stared at him and realize that he was new. That explained why he was nervous. He looked like he would pee on himself.

"Whiskey, neat"

After nodding, he leaves, seeming relieved to be away from me.

Most people say that Rowan and I are intimidating. It bothers most of them when we are around, but I love it. I revel in watching people get nervous around me. It feeds something inside me to watch their knees buckle and their voices stutter.

My mind goes to my daughter again. I can clearly see her being like us one day.

The same thing applied to Noah. Something like pride swells inside me, but I push it down. Like I said, I didn't plan on having anything to do with her. Let's be honest, biologically, she was mine, but I wasn't her dad. Liam, Harper's dead husband, was.

"Okay, I'm here..." Rowan's voice pulls me away from my thoughts.

I looked up to find him staring down at me. He was dressed casually. Something that has become normal since he and Ava fixed things. He was also more relaxed.

Motioning to the seat, I asked him to take a seat.

"I'm seated. Now, tell me what's bothering you."

Taking a deep breath, I decide to just say it. You know, rip it off like a motherfucking band aid "I have a daughter."

Emotions quickly play on his face before he finally shuts them down and an emotionless mask takes over.

"Tell me every fucking thing."

Ex-Husbands Regret Chapter 387-Rowan I fell back onto the sofa, my head spinning. When Gabe called and asked me to meet with him, I never thought that he would blow my mind.

I honestly thought he wanted to bitch about the decision by the board members.

He completely floored me when he revealed that he had a kid. A daughter no one knew about. Sighing, I turned to him and just stared. What was I supposed to tell him? What could I tell him? It's not every day that you find out that you have a child that no one knows about. "So, was this Harper a one-nightstand gone wrong or?" I asked, trying to piece the pieces together.

I know my brother. He was a womanizer, so I wouldn't be surprised. Actually, what I'm surprised by is that he doesn't have more baby mamas.

"No, she's not a one-night stand," he replied. "You know her, actually. She's a Beckett."

At first, the name doesn't ring a fucking bell, but then it registers.

"You've got to be kidding me, Gabe," I stared at him in shock. "As in Harper Beckett? Andrew's little sister?"

He doesn't say anything. He simply nods his head.

Shit! Personally, I don't know Harper that much. She was a quiet girl, with very few friends and was socially awkward. In a way, she reminded me of Ava back when we were younger. I wonder how they never became friends.

Shaking my head, I banish those thoughts and focus on Gabe.

"That's not all," he began.

"Seriously?"

I watch as he struggles to form the words. He then runs his hands down his face before speaking. "She's also my ex-wife."

"Come again"

There was no fucking way I heard him right.

"I said that she's my ex-wife," he repeated, this time in a lower tone.

I can't count the number of times he has managed to shock me today. I must have hit my head somewhere, because there is no fucking way Gabriel had once been married.

"What the hell, Gabe?" I shouted, not even sure how I felt. "How the fuck is she your ex-wife? When did you even get married, let alone get a fucking divorce?"

Gabe abruptly stands up and starts to pace the spacious space. Music was booming downstairs, and there was chattering all around, but that didn't seem to faze him. It seemed like the chaos inside him was greater than that outside.

"Calm down Gabe and tell me how the fuck no one knew you were married," I said, trying to calm him down. "I know you and I fucking know that you wouldn't marry unless you were pushed to it."

He takes a calming breath and begins talking. I listen to him carefully as he tells me everything from the beginning. Shocked doesn't begin to cover what I feel after what he has told me. When I was drowning in my misery, I didn't realize Gabriel had to take such a step just to protect my image.

My brother isn't like me. Despite my whorish ways before Emma and I became a couple, I always knew that I'd want to settle down one day. I always wanted a family of my own—a wife and kids. Gabriel was the complete opposite. He'd always said that he would never settle down. That he wouldn't be tied down by just women, nor would he ever have kids. To find out that he went against what he wanted just for my sake is fucking humbling.

"What should I do?" he asked with a confused look on his face.

I've never seen my brother like this. Never.

"I don't know, but you have to think about it. If, deep down, you know you can't be what Lilly needs, then don't enter her life. She doesn't know you yet, so you can get out of her life and make a clean slate. It's better she doesn't know you at all than have a dad that doesn't give a damn about her."

I would never force him to take responsibility. If he can't be what Lilly needs, then she's better off not knowing him or who he is to her.

"As for Harper, that is between you two," I finished saying. "But you'll have to come clean with mom and dad, especially if you're serious about marrying her again."

After staring at the wall for a whole minute or so, he finally faces me. "What if I want to be in her life? I never thought about being a father, but after our little interaction, I can't help but want to get to know her."

Ex-Husbands Regret Chapter 388-For the first time since I got his call, I smiled, happy that he was leaning towards getting to know his daughter.

"Then I'll support you."

"But how the fuck do I go about it? I know finances like the back of my fucking hand, but I don't know how to be a father," he sighed in frustration, making me chuckle.

"You've got to realize that there is no handbook that will guide you on how to be a good dad. Even after years of being a father, I still learn new things each and

every day. When it comes to being a parent, you just have to wing. Be there for them and do what feels right."

"Yeah, I guess you're right."

"What are you planning to do with Harper and do you feel anything for her?" I asked curiously.

His answer was instant. "Hell no! I don't feel anything for her, and if it wasn't for the fact that I needed her, I wouldn't have bothered."

Sighing, I asked him the question that has been bothering me since he told me his plans. "Then why the hell did you consider her as a wife? You can have your pick of any woman; why her?"

"I don't know... Maybe because she's familiar. I was married to her for three years. I know how she ticks. I also know she won't expect much from me, just like when we

were married. It will be a marriage of convenience where she won't nag me and get in my space because she knows her place."

I looked at him skeptically. I don't know if this is the right time to remind him of what he told me before. There is no way you'll live with someone for years and not have feelings for them.

It's too early to say anything, but I believe there is a deeper reason why his mind immediately thought of Harper the moment he was given the ultimatum. Either the reason is hidden deep down and he isn't aware, or he's just not ready to admit it.

Our unconscious mind knows what the conscious doesn't. I think that's the case with Gabriel. His soul knows something that his mind has yet to conceive.

"That's a start... Like I said, what your relationship will be is up to the two of you.

Just make sure you don't make mistakes that you can't take back," I said after a moment.

After he nodded his agreement, I ordered a drink and relaxed, glad to see him calmer. After catching up for three hours or so, I bid him goodnight and left the club.

My drive back home is reflective. I don't know about my father, but it seemed like, for us, as his kids, we are good at destroying our marriages. It's a fucking kick to the gut to know that my story and that of my brother are kind of similar.

Both of us were cruel when it came to our wives. We were assholes. Looking back, I still don't understand how Ava was able to forgive me. Don't get me wrong, I am fucking grateful that she took me back ever after all the shit I put her through, but all I'm saying is I wouldn't have forgiven myself if I were in the same shoes.

I get home in record time, getting impatient as I wait for the electronic gates to open up. Once they do, I drive up to our house and park my car before getting out.

I was dying to see my woman and have her in my arms.

Swinging the doors open, I walked to the kitchen, where I knew I'd find her.

"You're back." Ava looked up, smiling at me.

I'm struck yet again by her beauty and the love shining in her eyes. The love that I'd almost lost because of my stupidity.

Walking towards her. I pulled her to me, making her release a cute little startled laugh.

"I love you," I said, before sealing my lips with her.

I am so fucking grateful for a second chance with her. My only prayer is that Gabe won't screw up his.

Ex-Husbands Regret Chapter 389-Harper.

It's been almost a week since Gabriel left us with his driver and drove off. I haven't heard a thing from him, nor have I laid my eyes on him. He also hasn't been here, which makes me believe that he's staying at one of his many other properties.

It's been difficult trying to settle, especially for Lilly. She's the type of person who doesn't sleep well in a foreign bed. Sure, the bed is awesome, and the mattress is more comfortable than the one she has at home, but the problem is that it's not her bed.

At this point, I'm tempted to ask Gabriel to have her bed shipped here if things continue the way they are. She's barely sleeping, and the few hours she gets, I have to be there with her in order for her to sleep comfortably.

I've also not been at peace. I keep wondering if I made the right decision by agreeing to get married again. Life with Gabriel was a living hell... Should I have tried to fight him for Lilly's custody? I love my daughter with every fiber of my body, but am I ready to be Gabriel's wife again, despite what I already know about him?

I've battled with those questions, but the answer has remained the same. Yes, I would do anything for my daughter, including sacrificing my own happiness.

Slowly getting out of bed, I'm careful not to wake her up. I pushed the hair out of her face before placing a gentle kiss on her forehead. She smiles in her sleep.

That beautiful smile reinforces my decision to go through with the fake marriage.

I pad across the soft carpet before opening the door and leaving the room assigned to me. It was six thirty, so I wanted to make breakfast before Lilly woke up. For a kid, she's an early riser and rarely sleeps past eight o'clock.

I stumbled to a stop when I found Gabriel comfortably seated at the breakfast counter.

"What are you doing here?" I squealed, trying to calm my erratic, beating heart.

"I live here," he scoffed, but I don't miss the once-over he gave me.

It's when I saw his eyes flashing with something I can't describe that I realized that I was in my very short, red nightie. If there is something I've maintained from my past life, it's my love for silky, expensive nighties. I can never buy enough of them, and I have like a dozen.

I'm self-conscious at first given that I'm standing before him in a gown that leaves nothing to the imagination, but I remember that this is Gabriel we are talking about. I'm the last woman he would ever find attractive, let alone fuck.

Squaring my shoulders, I rounded the counter and began taking out the ingredients for making pancakes. Once they are all laid out, I turn on the coffee machine and brew myself my morning nectar. "Are you going to keep ignoring me?" he asked, pulling my eyes towards his gray ones.

Shrugging, I replied, "I assumed you'd speak once you worked out the courage to."

Gabriel glares at me, and I give him a sickly sweet smile, just to piss him off.

"Give me a cup," he commanded after a while.

Sizing him, I snickered, "Do you see a housemaid here?"

"No"

"Exactly, so if you want coffee, make it yourself."

Those gray eyes turn stormy, and I have a vague idea why. I smile internally, knowing that this is going to be so much fun. I may have to marry, but I wasn't going to make it easy for him. I was slowly going to pay back every shit he put me through.

"You're my wife, Harper. You should do this for me," he growled, his eyebrows pinched.

"First of all, I'm not yet your wife, and second of all, even after we do get married, it'll only be on paper. I haven't signed up to be your slave, just your pretend wife."

"Harper!" he warned, his voice taking a dangerous tone.

Sighing, I rub my face. "Do you have anything important to discuss or are you just here to waste my time?"

He doesn't say anything at first. He seemed lost. Like he was staring at a stranger, he didn't know what to do with or handle.

That's it, Gabriel. I'm totally a stranger, because the girl you knew died a very horrible death at your fucking hands.

Clearing his throat, he schools his features. "I wanted to discuss the contract.

Here is a copy. You can go through it before signing it."

Ex-Husbands Regret Chapter 390-He pushes the document across the counter. Taking it, I go through it. I'll have my lawyer check it out after, but it's always good to go through a contract yourself first. If there is one thing my brother taught me, it is that I should never sign anything I haven't read.

The basics we discussed were there. The contract would be valid for a minimum of two years. At the end of it, I would get Unity Venture and some alimony.

Gabriel will also continue supporting Lilly. He also stated that he wanted Lilly recognized as his daughter, and her last name would be changed to Wood.

Those were the most important to me, so after reading and re-reading them, I put the papers down.

"Any complaints?" he asked, forwarding me a pen.

"No, but I'd like to add some stipulations." I stared at the pen, but didn't pick it up.

"What kind of stipulations?"

Taking a deep breath, I lift my head. "One, I demand fidelity. Our marriage before was a secret and that allowed you to get away with cheating on me. This one, as stated, will be publicly announced, and I'll be damned if I let you humiliate me in public by having mistresses. I also won't allow any embarrassment towards Lilly. She deserves more than a father who can't keep it in his pants. I don't want her to have to see articles about you parading other women in magazines."

I stopped, pulling air into my lungs. His stare is intense, and his jaw is locked, but I refuse to stand down.

"I love sex, Harper. What am I supposed to do?" he finally asked.

I shrug. "Your hands will probably see a lot of actions, but I don't care. Figure it out, because if I so much as find out you cheated on me, I will cut off your cock and shove it so far up your ass you'll need a rectal retractor to remove it."

I watch as he winces, but eventually he nods. I guess he's starting to see that I'm not one to fuck with.

"What about you?" he asked after a while.

"I have my very handy battery-operated boyfriend, so that shouldn't be a worry, and besides, unlike you, who is a total man whore, I don't go around spreading my legs for every Tom, Dick and Harry." He released a sound that awfully sounded like a growl. He's pissed off. Call me petty, but I love the fact that I'm pissing him off.

“Second of all, I expect you to be a father. You were willing to use Lilly as a way to get me to do what you wanted, so you should be willing to be her dad. You will spend time with her, get to know her, and come to her recitals and practices.

Anything that concerns her, I expect you to be present. If you can't agree to that, then I won't sign the agreement.”

“I already planned to be involved in her life, Harper. She's my daughter,” he said, surprising the shit out of me.

I didn't expect that. I thought I'd have to fight for him to agree. Quickly, I hid my shock. I didn't want him to see that he'd taken me by surprise.

“Good,” I nodded. “Because if you break my daughter's heart, the 'til death do us part' will come by real quick, and it would be a total shame if I had to be a widow for the second time.” He just stares at me like I've lost my damned mind, and maybe I have.

“Lastly, I don't want to wait till the end of our contract to join Unity Ventures. I want to start working there as soon as it can be arranged. If I'm going to take over, I need to know the workings of the company.”

“Fine,” he nodded. “Anything else?”

I shook my head. “No. That's all.”

“Okay then, I'll get my lawyer to add your stipulations and have them back for your signature by evening.” He took the documents and, without another word, walked out of the kitchen.

I sigh a breath of relief. Unlike the last time, this time I knew what I was getting into, and I've taken countermeasures to make sure that after the two years I'll leave in an piece.

There is no way I am going to get hurt, right?