

# Lost Me Gained Regret #Chapter 11 - Read Lost Me Gained Regret Chapter 11

Chapter 11

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I felt like I had plunged into an ice-cold lake. My blood seemed to freeze in my veins. For a moment, I doubted my ears.

I had suspected something off between them, but every suspicion got denied, time and again.

Even without a blood relation, one was the heir to the Ferguson Group, the other a lady of the Ferguson family. They were nominally siblings to the outside world.

And both were married to other people. Bryant, the golden boy, couldn't possibly be involved in such a scandal.

Yet, not far from me, Bryant, with eyes red with fury, had Margaret pinned against the wall, his voice cold and mocking. "Divorce for me, huh? You were the one who chose to marry someone else. What right do you have to ask anything of me now?"

"I..." Margaret was speechless by his barrage of questions, tears falling like pearls from a broken necklace, her hands fumbling with the hem of Bryant's shirt.

"I was wrong, Bry. Can't you forgive me this once? Please, just once. And, I had no choice back then..."

Bryant said, "I'm already married."

"Can't you get a divorce?" Margaret's desperation was palpable, her face etched with sorrow as if Bryant's denial would shatter her, I was shocked by her blunt question. She got no hint of shame for being the other woman. Bryant seemed almost amused by his anger, his teeth clenched. "Marriage is not a game to me, as it seems to be for you!"

With that, he moved to leave.

Margaret clung to his shirt, refusing to let go.

I knew Bryant could effortlessly shake her off if he wished. I watched the scene unfold, a part of me hoping for something, hoping he would break free and draw a clear line. And our marriage might still have a chance.

And he did just that. Dropping a line about acting grown-up and avoiding foolishness, he seemed to signal an end to the drama.

I breathed a sigh of relief. My curiosity to eavesdrop further vanished.

"Do you love her? Bry, look me in the eyes and tell me. Do you love her?"

With the persistence of an old denied candy, Margaret grabbed Bryant's arm again.

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My heart hung in limbo once more.

Before turn around, I heard Bryant's voice, emotion hard to discern. "That's none of your business."

"Then don't you love me anymore? That should concern me, right?" Margaret pressed.

For a moment, I admired Margaret's bravery of relentless questioning. Later, I realized it wasn't bravery but sheer audacity, backed by something I never had - favoritism.

Bryant stood tall, suddenly stiff, his face an impassive mask of frost. He didn't answer, and Margaret didn't let him leave. It was like a scene from a melodrama. Each silent second was suffocating, making me forget to breathe.

"Mrs. Ferguson, I brought out that coat you wore last spring. Please put it on in case you catch a cold."

Bryant's gaze flickered in my direction.

I felt the awkwardness of uncovering someone's secret, yet, at that moment, I also felt a sense of closure,

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The one who owed an explanation was Bryant, and he knew it.

He broke away from Margaret and strode over to me, his voice a stark contrast to the sternness from moments ago, gentle yet absentminded. "Did you hear that?"

"Yeah." I didn't hide it.

Yet, he didn't say much, taking a coat from the servant to drape over my shoulders and pulling me close as we headed inside. His demeanor was relaxed. "It's chilly out. Let's go in."

He acted like what I had just overheard was only an everyday chat.

"Bry." Margaret's insistent voice echoed again and again, "Bry!"

Bryant acted as if he hadn't heard.

He seemed somewhat distracted for the rest of the evening, checking his phone frequently.

Finally, as nine o'clock rolled around, Timothy's usual bedtime, we were ready to leave.

"You're a married man now. You need to act responsibly!" Timothy warned Bryant sternly as he walked us to the yard. "Be good to Jane. Don't think you can push her around. because she doesn't have family backing!"

I felt a lump form in my throat.

Bryant smiled lightly, nodding. "Don't worry. I won't let anyone hurt her, not even myself."

"Dear child, if anything troubles you, come to me. I'll take care of it." Timothy patted my head affectionately.

I smiled back. "I will visit soon. Please go rest."

On the way home, I sat in the passenger seat, fighting off sleep.

Whether it was the early stages of pregnancy or something else, drowsiness had become my constant companion. Yet, at that moment, sleep eluded me. My body was tired, but my mind was alarmingly clear. I had planned to wait until we got home for an explanation. But the wait was agonizing I couldn't hold back any longer, my voice still calm. "What exactly is the relationship between you and Margaret?"

Was she his first love, or the one he loved but could never have?

Hearing that, Bryant slowed the car, replying calmly, "Margaret and I almost became something once."

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I bit my lip, feeling as if my throat was blocked by a sponge soaked in water, struggling to find my voice. "Was it during your college days?"

Memories long buried began to surface. Bryant had been the golden boy of RiverCity University, my senior. With his handsome looks and the heir to the Ferguson Group, he was the epitome of charm and sophistication.

No girl could resist him. His backpack was always full of love letters from admirers. But before I could confess my crush on him, rumors swirled that he had someone special in his heart. So, it was Margaret.

"How did you know?" Bryant glanced at me, surprised.

I turned to look at him, my voice heavy with unspoken emotions. "Bryant you forgot. I was also a student at RiverCity University."

"Oh, right." He reverted to his usual calm demeanor. "Sorry, it's been a long time. Was it the passage of time, or was it indifference?"

As I was about to say something, his phone began to vibrate.

Without looking, he hung up. The phone rang endlessly as if the caller wouldn't stop until the end.

Bryant hung up once more, his expression growing irritated. "Margaret's been spoiled by Teresa and my father."

I chuckled, taking his phone to block and delete the contact before handing it back. "There, peace at last."

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Bryant seemed stunned but remained silent.

I asked in a hushed tone, "What about our wedding night? Why did you leave?"

I vaguely remembered I sat on the balcony waiting all night that night. It was our wedding night, and he left his newlywed wife at home, carelessly heading out. I thought something serious had happened, worried about his safety while also fretting if I had somehow displeased him. At the same time, I was eagerly hoping for his early return.

I was only twenty-three then, having somehow married the man I had secretly adored for years. How could I not have expectations for our marriage and him?

Then, I finally learned that while I was eagerly waiting for him to come home, he was with another woman. It all felt like a cruel joke.

Bryant didn't hide it anymore, his voice cold and steady. "That night, she had gone drag racing and got into a mishap. The police called me to pick her up."

What a coincidence.

On the very day of our wedding, Margaret had an accident, and it was in the dead of night. But I remembered, just several days after the wedding, at the family dinner, she was there, without a scratch on her.

I rolled down the car window, silent for a while, and said calmly, "Bryant, if she's the one you've got feelings for, we can go our separate ways on good terms."

He slammed on the brakes and parked at the side of the road, his gaze fixed on me, his emotions finally surfacing.

It was unusual to see him anything other than cool and collected.

"I never thought..." Buzz. The vibration of a text message interrupted him.

Bryant glanced at it, annoyance flashing across his face, and he said without hesitation, "She's in trouble again. I might have to go check on her."

I struggled to contain the bitterness surging in my chest, trying to control my emotions, and then I glanced at him through the streetlight. The person I had longed for seemed to fill me with disillusionment.

"Got it." I tiredly opened the car door and stepped out. At that moment of anger, divorce crossed my mind. But I'd loved Bryant for so many years. It wasn't going to be easy to just let it go. Fear of regret held me back. It was the fear that I might look back and feel remorse one

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day.

As the black Maybach sped away, I sighed deeply, watching the bustling traffic and the flashing neon lights, feeling a sense of loneliness I hadn't felt in a long time.

"What's personality.

Christine's call came out of the blue, her voice as vibrant and bright as her. The early autumn breeze made me shiver, and wrapped my jacket tighter around me, crossing the street.

"Just wandering," I said.

"Really? Mr. Ferguson has the time and inclination to..."

"No, by myself." I cut her off, feeling helpless.

"What a jerk, leaving you alone during the holidays? Where are you?" Christine's temper flared instantly. She could be indiscriminately combative when it came to my issues.

I couldn't help but laugh. "Over by the Cloud River."

"Wait for me. I'm coming to get you." She hung up abruptly, clearly in a rush.

Her car pulled up before me in less than twenty minutes, and she rolled down the window, "Get in."

"What happened?" As we drove, Christine glanced at me, "Don't tell me you've been wandering the streets for miles alone."

She might come off as brash and outspoken, but she was more rational and considerate than anyone else.

I never thought about lying to her and just shared what had happened.

"What the fuck!" Christine's face was a mix of confusion and anger. "So this Margaret wants Bryant to divorce you for her? ran into her at the office today, flaunting that Patek Philippe watch. Talk about a nice watch. Shame about the wearer! Bitch! And Bryant what's he doing messing around with another woman when he's got a wife? I swear he's a second-rate lover and a first-rate fool!"

"So, what are you thinking?" she asked after her rant.

"I haven't decided yet." I shook my head.

Christine reached over and tapped my forehead. "You, you're usually so sharp. But when it comes to Bryant, you're clueless. Missing out on a lifetime of happiness over a few dinners, and you're the only one clinging to the past. Bryant probably forgot about it ages ago."

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Christine blurted it out, and I was momentarily dazed. “What dinner?”

She raised an eyebrow, “The meals Bryant bought you in the cafeteria. Forgotten already?” No, that was unforgettable. I fell for Bryant because of those meals.

After my parents passed away early, my aunt took me into her home. She meant well, but there was also my uncle and cousin.

I started working part-time in middle school, and in college, I was self-reliant, paying my way through tuition and living expenses.

Once, after paying an unexpected fee, I was left short on cash. Suffering from malnutrition, I once fainted at school and was taken to the campus clinic by Bryant.

When I woke up, he was there like a figure bathed in sunlight, seemingly glowing. I was stunned at first sight.

He didn’t say much, just, “Awake? The doctor says you’re not eating well. You’ve gotta take better care of yourself..”

I was grateful. “Thanks, you are...”

“No need. I’ve got to go.” Bryant said.

Our conversation was as distant and cold as he seemed. Yet, afterward, in the cafeteria, he or his friends would place a tray filled with food in front of me. Their excuses were flimsy but saved my pride.

Christine abruptly asked, “Tell me, was it all about those meals? Or was it love at first sight?”

“Both, I guess.” I couldn’t deny it. My affection for Bryant wasn’t just about the meals. It was about him. It was only natural for someone who’d walked in darkness to long for the light.

Christine saw right through it. “I’ve never supported you and Bryant being together. He seems proud and collected on the surface, but that only means he’s indifferent. Deep down, he’s cold and unpredictable. You can’t easily win him over.”

It wasn’t the first time Christine had said something like that.

But back then, my marriage to Bryant seemed harmonious, so I had argued with Christine

a few times.

She continued, and her brows furrowed. “But, Bryant’s smart. Why would he give you ten

percent of his shares to make you happy? I couldn’t quite understand him. Maybe three years of marriage did develop some feelings?”

I was just as confused. The more I thought about it, the more it puzzled me.

As we talked, the car slowly stopped in front of a bar.

I sighed, “I can’t drink.”

“Why, on antibiotics?” Christine asked.

I gestured toward my stomach, feeling a sudden softness. “Christine, I’m pregnant.”

“What, I’m going to be a godmother?” Christine’s eyes widened in shock and joy, and she fumbled before carefully placing her hand on my stomach.

“When did you find out? How far along? Are you feeling okay? Any morning sickness?” she bombarded me with questions while touching my belly.

the joy of

I answered her with a smile. Since finding out was pregnant, I finally felt sharing good news. I realized that others were looking forward to this new life.

It wasn’t until my phone started ringing that Christine snapped out of it. She didn’t answer, pulling me out of the car and waving at Steven, who was running out of the bar. “You’re a real nag, calling and texting.”

Christine was beautiful and friendly, fitting in well with Steven and the gang.

“Been ages since I saw you. Missed you like crazy.” Steven joked around and then noticed me, surprised. “Jane? Weren’t you supposed to go and celebrate the holiday with Timothy tonight? Where’s Bryant?”

Christine was quick to deflect. “Still have the nerve to ask. You guys are all the same a good one among you. I’m warning you. Don’t tip off Bryant about Jane being here

“Who says? I’m quite the ‘good’ one,” Steven shot back.



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I didn't want to catch on too quickly, but unfortunately, I did.

Christine scoffed with a roll of her eyes, "Eh, it's average at best."

I looked at her, baffled, my eyes screaming. "What?"

"We slept once, and trust me, it was a disaster. Christine didn't hold back, not even caring that Steven was right there.

Steven was hopping mad. "Hey, cut me some slack! It was my first time, what do you know!"

"Whoa, whoa, whoa, hold your horses. I'm not taking the fall for this. Don't give me that 'first time' excuse, you Casanova. Even if it was, it should've been with a hand puppet or something," Christine interjected, gesturing toward his hands.

Seeing the usually carefree Steven blush at Christine's words made me realize what was happening between them. They had a one-night stand.

Steven must be chasing after Christine.

Paying no further attention to Steven, Christine grabbed my arm and led me toward the private booth. "Some guy is back from abroad Steven and his crew organized this get-together and roped me in for fun."

"Which guy?" I whispered.

"You might know him. It's..." As Christine spoke, she pushed open the door.

Several guys were sitting inside, including a few familiar faces and one particularly striking man.

Tall with long legs, he wore a white shirt, sleeves casually rolled up, revealing his wrist adorned with a bracelet.

The bracelet seemed out of place with his demeanor, yet it was clear that he cherished it.

Almost instantly, as he looked up and our eyes met, a smile spread across his face, and he stood up, "Long time no see."

"Mark!" I beamed, "Indeed, it's been ages. You left for abroad so suddenly."

Bryant's circle of friends, mostly from childhood, included Christine and me as schoolmates. I got to know Steven and his garg better after marrying Bryant. Only Mark Larson was a senior in my major. We were pretty close in college.

Ever the Joker, Steven teased, "Yeah, wonder which girl broke Mark's heart so bad he had to run off without a word, even missed your and Bryant's wedding." Chapter 15.

Mark chuckled, touching his nose. "Don't listen to him. Come on, have a seat."

"Yeah, come sit," Christine nudged me toward the couch beside Mark. "You and Mark go way back. You'll have plenty to chat about."

After settling me in, she dived into the lively group with Steven and the others.

Mark asked, "Fancy some juice?"

"Sure, thanks, Mark." I smiled, "Though you've been away, I've kept up with your achievements. You must be tired of winning awards by now."

"You've been following my updates?" He seemed pleasantly surprised, his eyes lighting up with amusement.

"Not exactly." I laughed, feeling a bit embarrassed. "It's my assistant. She's a huge fan of a huge fan of yours. I should introduce you two."

"That would be nice." His mood softened, his gaze gentle, "You and Bryant must be happy. I see all these En posts calling him a 'wife adorer."

At his words, I paused. I didn't know why, but Bryant always seemed to put on a show of being head over heels for me. I once fell for that charade too.

I tried to brush it off. "You know how the internet blows things out of proportion."

"But are you happy?" Mark's voice was soft and earnest as he asked.

Aside from Christine, he was the first person to care about this question.

I looked down, managing a small smile. "Hard to say."

"Then we won't say anything more about it." He didn't press further, just smiled warmly.

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When I first met Mark and Bryant, I thought they were much alike. Both had that calm, reserved, and steady vibe.

But boy, I was so wrong. Mark's composure and gentleness came from deep within, but Bryant was a different story.

Take the present as an instance. Mark dropped a subject out of politeness, not wanting to pry into personal matters, while Bryant? He didn't ask because he genuinely didn't care. Bryant's heart wasn't in it.

We were at the party that lasted till nearly midnight, and Steven was already rallying us for round two par Knowing I was pregnant and shouldn't be up late, Christine insisted on taking me home. That was when Steven suggested, "Let Mark drive her. He's not much of a night owl, either."

Christine agreed.

But I was worried about her and tried to refuse

"Come on, get in the car," Christine said, reading my mind and nudging me toward Mark's car with a meaningful look. "Don't worry. I can handle myself. Men are like the fish in the sea, and I'm not about to start fishing. I want the whole ocean!" she declared with a laugh. I pinched her radiant cheek. "Fine, call me if you need anything."

Mark got into the car, too.

Feeling awkward, I said, "Mark, I live on Grand Peace Avenue. Is that on your way? I can take a cab if it's not."

"Since when are we so formal?" he joked, handing me his phone. "Could you set up the navigation? I haven't been around for years. Not too familiar with the roads."

"Sure." I took his phone.

RiverCity never slept. Even at this hour, downtown was still brightly lit.

I worried the long silence would be awkward, but Mark always knew what to say to keep the conversation going. Being around him was like a breath of fresh air.

Maybe his stable demeanor made me ask, "Mark, how do you handle things when you hit a rough patch?"

He furrowed his brows slightly, stopping at a red light, and turned to me. "Don't worry, there's always a way."

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His calm yet resolute tone eased the tension I'd felt all night. About twenty minutes later, we pulled up in front of my house.

He handed me a gift bag as I got out, "A little something for you. Hope you like it."

"Thanks, Mark!" I smiled, feeling much better. "Let me treat you to dinner sometime when you're free."

"It's a deal." He smiled softly and added, "Ensure you're eating well. You've lost weight. Don't get malnourished."

I didn't think much of it. "Okay, I will."

I waited for him to leave before going inside, but he spoke first, "Go on. I'll wait until you're safely inside. Wouldn't want to fail the task Steven gave me."

"Okay then, drive safe." With that, I turned and went into the house.

By that time, Emma had gone to bed, leaving a light on for me. The house was so quiet.

After showering, I checked my phone before bed.

There were loads of messages, but not a single one from Bryant. I was thought the worst case scenario w him not coming home for the night. But it turned out that I was in for an even bigger "surprise."

With so much on my mind, I struggled to fall asleep and woke up near noon, starving.

Heading downstairs, I noticed an unfamiliar suitcase in the living room and heard voices. other than Emma's. One was eerily familiar.

Frowning, I scanned the room until my gaze landed on the kitchen. m

He'd reach out, and she knew to hand him the salt. Another reach, and she passed him a paper towel. Their synchrony was uncanny.

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Every move felt like a slap across my face. My heart ached with the sting of it. I had played out scenes like that in my head over and over again. Yet, standing in my home, I couldn't help but feel a chill run down my spine.

"Jane, you're awake?" Margaret turned to see me and greeted me with a smile, "Come on, try some of Bry's cooking. It's to die for."

With that, she carried a dish to the table, acting every bit the hostess.

I took a deep breath, stepped past her, and asked Bryant straight up, "Why is she here?"

Finishing up in the kitchen, Bryant removed his apron and said coldly, "She'll be gone after this meal."

"You want me to leave, huh?" Margaret glared at him.

"Margaret, take the hint! Stop stirring trouble," Bryant's tone was icy, his patience wearing thin.

"Whatever," Margaret muttered and pulled me to join the meal as if the person who had been crying and begging my husband to divorce me wasn't her and as if she wasn't the one trying to whisk my husband away. Bryant's cooking was indeed excellent, a full spread that was a feast for the senses.

I wasn't hungry, but the baby inside me needed to eat.

What did I have to fear if she could shamelessly be my home? So, I sat down to eat.

Margaret tried to make conversation. "Tastes good, doesn't it?"

I forced a smile. "Bryant's cooking is always great. Whenever he's home, he's in the kitchen."

Of course, that was a lie. But I just wanted to mark my territory in the pettiest way possible.

Margaret cast a fleeting glance at Bryant. "Never knew you were this good to everyone."

"Can't even shut up when you're eating?" Bryant scoffed and served me some ribs.

Margaret huffed and turned to me, "Do you know why he can cook? I taught him, especially tomato sauce pasta, my favorite. He puts his heart into it! But he made it so often for me that I got sick of it. Only makes it how when he's lazy."

My grip on my fork tightened until my knuckles turned white, nails digging into my So, the pasta that I cherished was leftovers of Margaret's boredom.

flesh.

I recalled asking him where he learned to cook on our anniversary night, and he zoned out Chapter 17

for a whole minute.

During that minute, what was he thinking about? Margaret? Or the memories of learning to cook with her?

"Speaking of which, you should thank me. If it weren't for me, how would you have ended up with such a catch?" Margaret kept talking, her voice soft but irritating.

I slammed my fork down, unable to tolerate it anymore, and sneered, "Oh, is that why? Your marriage didn't work out, so you thought he'd clean up your mess? Bryant, I didn't know you had a thing for being a rebound guy and a garbage collector," I said, my gaze on Bryant turning co

"Jane, what the hell is that supposed to mean? Margaret was livid, her om eyes reddening as she looked at Bryant: "Bry, we're supposed to be family. You mean you can't have family around after getting married?"

"Had enough? Kevin will drive you home," Bryant said, not even sparing her an extra glance.

"You too? Siding with her against me?" Margaret's tears fell instantly, her face disbelief and pity. "You're done with me?"

Bryant's voice was emotionless. "You know what you promised. If you need help, contact Kevin directly from now on."

Margaret trembled slightly as if deeply hurt.

Seeing Bryant's firm stance, she smiled and said bitterly, "Fine get it. I won't bother you anymore. What happens to me from now on is none of your business."

She got up, pulling her suitcase without hesitation.

Kevin was already waiting in the car for her and quickly got out to help with her luggage. Bryant didn't look her way, not even once.

I was surprised at how quickly he drew the line. Just the night before, I found out about his past with Margaret, and today, they were done.

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I couldn't believe how fast everything was moving.

"What are you thinking about? Eat your food." Bryant ruffled my hair, pulling me back to the moment. It was like there had never been any distance between us.

He had spent the whole day with me, a rarity. I went for a walk in the garden, and he followed. I fed the ducks at the pond, and he was right there with me. I worked on my design sketches, and he sat beside me, dealing with emails and calls.

He didn't say it, but I could tell he was trying to apologize to me. After showering that evening, my phone alarm went off as I popped a prenatal vitamin into my mouth.

Bryant came in with a glass of warm milk. "Why are you taking medicine?"

"Just a supplement" I looked into his deep, thoughtful eyes and said, "Can you take some time off next Saturday? I need to go to the hospital for a check up, and then, I want to take you somewhere"

It was time for my prenatal check-up. He had agreed to cut ties with Margaret choosing us, but I still wasn't so reassured. I didn't want to tell Bryant about the pregnancy just yet, fearing any complications. If everything went well, he would find out at the hospital. He would be there to see the ultrasound himself, to see that he was going to be a father. We would have our child. With that thought, I couldn't help but start looking forward to it.

"Sule, is your stomach still bothering you? We don't have to wait until Saturday. We can go to the hospital tomorrow"

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The next afternoon, Christine came to my office to slack off.

"Is the Marketing Department that slow today? I paused my work to tease her. Christine was in a V-neck silk blouse and a beige mermaid skirt, her high heels clicking as she walked in, a vision of grace and allure.

"What, can't the boss' wife let her employees catch a break?" She smirked, placed two cups of decaf coffee on my desk, and chattered away. "Don't worry, I made sure it's decaf. I asked a doctor friend, and he said you should avoid caffeine during pregnancy. There are so many precautions. I'll text you the details later. Don't be careless. Pregnancy is a big deal, you know..."

"Christine," I cut her off, grinning at her puzzled look, "You sound just like my mom."

My parents died because of a business failure, leading to debt collectors confronting me at school to pressure my dad into paying them back.

Panicked, my parents rushed to my aid, only to meet with a tragic accident.

I was just eight years old back then.

For years, I was trapped in guilt, believing their deaths were my fault.

But then, Christine reminded me that my parents died because they loved me.

Indeed, in my blurred memories of them, their love was abundant. Despite the demands of their business, my dad always made time for me and my mom every weekend.

My uncle pressured them to have another child, a son, to inherit the family business.

My mom immediately dismissed the idea, saying, "Who said only a son can inherit? We will not let anyone take what belongs to our daughter. Whether it's love or wealth, it's all hers."

If that accident hadn't happened, my mom would have been just as attentive about my pregnancy.

"Missing your folks?" Christine asked, then paused, then nodded, "I think their memorial is coming up. After a brief pause, she checked her phone. "It's close. Maybe you should bring Bryant along to visit your parents this year."

"Yeah, that's the plan," I said.

Thinking back, in the three years we've been married, I've never taken Bryant to visit my parents' graves. Partly because he was always busy and partly because it never felt like the right time, I never mentioned it.

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My parents' memorial was coming up that Saturday.

After a follow-up appointment at the hospital in the morning, I planned to visit their graves. It wouldn't take long. But for some reason, I felt an unsettling unease that prevented me from speaking confidently.

I couldn't bring myself to tell Bryant about my pregnancy the day before. Nor could I assure Christine today that I would bring Bryant along. I feared that plans might not keep pace with changes.

In my heart, Bryant and Margaret's relationship was like a ticking time bomb.



Seeing me less than enthusiastic, Christine glanced toward Margaret's office. "Did Bryant sort out that Patek Philippe bitch?"

"Pretty much," I said.

After more chatter, Christine seemed reassured and returned to the Marketing Department.

I couldn't tell if Margaret had a change of heart or had an epiphany. For several days, we coexisted without issue. I was worried that she might obstruct Christmas' limited edition design, but it smoothly progressed to the prototyping phase.

"Girls, what do you think is the real deal between the new girl and the boss?"

"Beats me."

"Maybe she's the boss' wife, but there'  
days."

been no sign of them together these past few

"Maybe she's just low-key. Who else gets a welcome like hers, with the CEO personally introducing her?"

"That doesn't necessarily mean she's the boss wife. Could be the other woman, for all we know."

I overheard some colleagues gossiping about Margaret and Bryant's relationship while I was getting water in the break room. Turning around, I caught Margaret looking at me with a strange expression. "I thought you'd be smug about it." she said.

"What?" I was stunned, not immediately catching on.

The gossiping colleagues scattered like birds, leaving Margaret and me in the break room.

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Margaret forced a smile, placing her cup under the coffee machine. "Why do you always seem so calm? You don't get bummed out when you lose, and you don't even act excited when you win."

I didn't have the leisure to open up to her. After getting myself some lemon water, I turned to leave.

Margaret suddenly laughed. "I just can't stand you. You think you've won, huh? Jane, life is long."

She finally lost her temper and showed her true colors.

I frowned. "Are you out of your mind today?"

"What?" Margaret was confused.

"Maybe you should go and see a therapist. Don't skimp. While Albert isn't rolling in dough, he can surely afford some therapy sessions for you." I suggested.

With that, I strode off.

I heard something smashing from the break room just before entering my office. Margaret lost it, indeed.

Bryant was waiting for me in the parking garage after work. These days, he lived up to to the internet's nickname of "wife-spoiler." We went to work together, came home together, and he had Kevin deliver afternoon tea to my office daily, along with the occasional gift.

"What do you fancy for dinner tonight?" As soon as I got into the car, Bryant asked.

I looked at him, raising an eyebrow. "You're cooking again?"

He had been cooking dinner for the past several nights.

Even Emma, our housekeeper, looked at him with fear, worried she might be out of a job. With one hand on the Najo wheel, as we left the parking garage, Bryant replied smoothly. "Tire of it already?"

"Not at all. Just curious. You rarely cooked before." I said:

"From now on, as long as we're home, I'll cook" Bryant promised.

"Oh I certainly wouldn't object.

Although I knew where he learned his cooking skills, it didn't bother me as long as he kept his distance from Margaret. She trained my man. If anyone should be upset, it was her.

When we reached home, Bryant changed into casual wear and headed to the kitchen to start dinner,

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Bryant stood in the kitchen, bathed in the warm glow of the setting sun streaming through the floor-to-ceiling windows, casting a soft halo around him that softened his usually cold demeanor.

He lowered his gaze, his defined and dexterous hands skillfully prepping the ingredients for dinner. The scene gave off a vibe of serene simplicity.

Perhaps sensing my stare, he glanced over with a light chuckle. "Why are you looking at me?"

"I just like looking at you." My response was straightforward.

After all, admiring my husband was nothing to be embarrassed about, especially since he was quite the looker as if sculpted by the divine hands of God himself.

He was about to reply when his phone, tucked in his pants, rang.

As he was filleting a fish, he couldn't answer it himself. "Honey, could you get that for me?"

"Sure." I moved to his side, reaching hesitantly into his pocket, a blush creeping up my cheeks.

Our intimacy was usually for the privacy of our bedroom, and outside of it, we maintained a respectful distance.

Noticing my hesitation, he glanced at me with a playful smirk. "We've been married for years. What's there to be shy about? It's just a phone, not anything else."

"I know..." Despite my attempt to be careful, my hand brushed against him through the fabric, igniting an awkwardness between us.

Flustered, I managed to retrieve the phone, only to meet his meaningful gaze as I did.

The caller ID displayed Kevin. "Kevin, Bryant can't talk right now. What's up?" I asked after answering.

"Mrs. Ferguson." Recognizing my voice, Kevin paused before speaking, "It's nothing urgent. I just wanted to check a detail in a contract with the boss. Monday is fine."

Neither Bryant nor I dwelled much on this little episode.

Lately, I'd been feeling unusually sleepy, and after dinner, while Bryant and I were taking a stroll in the backyard to digest, I could barely keep my eyes open.

After a shower, I hit the bed and was out like a light. I had been sleeping soundly but was rudely awakened in the middle of the night by the need to use the bathroom.

Turning on the light, I noticed Bryant wasn't in bed. Coming to a bit, I heard voices from

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the balcony.

Bryant's voice was cold and terse. "So, you're just going to hand her the knife if she wants to die! Call 911 if you have to! What's calling me going won't do it! How

10 do? Am I a doctor or a cop? She many times has she threatened to end it all without a scratch? Tell her I won't divorce Jane! She should get that through her head!"

His voice dropped even further as he added, "But ensure she doesn't hurt herself. Keep someone on her."

I couldn't catch that last bit.

Bryant stood with his back to me, one hand resting on the railing, his entire demeanor exuding frustration.

Margaret's obsession with him left me feeling somewhat helpless.

After returning from the bathroom, sleep evaded me. Soon after, Bryant returned to the bedroom, gently pulling me into his embrace. His presence was comforting, carrying the coolness of early autumn nights.

However, when I woke up, he was gone again. I searched the house but found no sign of him. He had promised to accompany me to the hospital today.

Emma mentioned, "Mrs. Ferguson, Mr. Ferguson left early this morning. It seemed like an emergency."

I stopped for a sec, then figured I'd just call him from the home phone since I left my cell upstairs.

Soon, Bryant's weary voice came through. "Hello?"

Sensing something was off in his tone, I asked, "What's wrong?"

Bryant said, "Jane, could you have Emma go with you to the hospital? I don't think P can make it today."