

Lost Me, Gained Regret (Jane and Bryant Ferguson)

Chapter 461

His voice was hoarse. "Home."

The driver, compliant as ever, steered towards the Ferguson Mansion.

Then, from the backseat, some words cut through, "To LunarLakeBay Villas."

The driver hesitated for a moment. Glancing at Bryant through the rearview mirror, he made a U-turn at the next intersection.

The rain was still falling, tapping against the car's exterior, but Bryant felt as if it was pounding on him instead. Bit by bit, it seemed to extinguish the pride and dignity that was ingrained in his bones, inch by inch.

The car stopped within the courtyard of LunarLake Bay Villas, and before the driver could offer an umbrella, Bryant stepped out into the downpour with determined strides.

Stepping back into the villa, into the marriage home he shared with Jane, felt surreal. It was as if it was only yesterday when he'd come home from a night out, and Jane would be there to greet him, helping him to the couch. Carefully preparing him a hangover remedy.

"Sir, you're not returning to Ferguson Mansion tonight?" Emma emerged from the bedroom as she heard the noise, flicking on the light with a snap, illuminating the room.

Bryant squinted against the bright light. "Hmm."

"Oh my goodness, you're soaking wet! Hurry upstairs and take a hot shower, catching a cold in the summer is the worst!"

Emma, a long-standing figure in the Ferguson household, acted both as a servant and a sort of caretaker for Bryant, urging him to go up and change.

Bryant simply nodded slightly and made his way upstairs alone, settling into the sofa by the window and lighting a cigarette.

Nothing had changed. She had left, and so had he; only Emma remained, guarding the traces of their three-year marriage. Jane couldn't bear to face it. And he, filled with guilt

and reluctance, couldn't dare to. After a while, there was a knock on the bedroom door. It was Emma.

Upon being allowed in, she entered, placing a bowl of hangover soup on the table. "You've been out again tonight, haven't you? I learned this recipe from Mrs. Ferguson; she adjusted it several times until it was just right for you. Remember to drink it before you go to sleep, it'll help prevent a headache tomorrow."

Bryant almost smiled, his voice barely a whisper, "...Okay."

"Sir..." Seeing him in such a dispirited state, Emma couldn't help but ask, "Is something wrong?"

Timothy Ferguson had passed away. Mrs. Ferguson was gone. And around Bryant... there was no one left who truly cared for him.

Bryant chuckled softly. "Emma, was I... really terrible to her?"

Emma paused, then gently shook her head. "How could that be? You were always very good to Mrs. Ferguson."

In public, he gave her dignity. In private, he provided materially. But, Emma felt a sense of regret on their behalf, "It's just... something was missing." Bryant looked up, asking, "Missing what?"

"Love."

Emma had seen their marriage up close and sighed, "Bryant, another girl might have been happy with the kind of marriage you offered, but not Jane."

"She wanted you, your affection, from the very beginning."

"So, it makes sense that she would leave."

After Emma left, Bryant sat rigid on the sofa, lost in thought. The cigarette burned down to the filter, dropping ash and a hint of ember onto his skin without him noticing. The rainy night was loud, his face pale and eyes reddened, shattered.

She really... didn't want him anymore?

Whether she moved out or asked for a divorce, he had never truly felt abandoned until now. He always thought she would come back someday. But what he faced instead was the reality of her being with someone else.

Bryant rubbed his face, seemingly unable to accept this truth, and picked up his phone to dial a familiar number.

-Jane.

The call connected quickly, her voice light and cheerful on the other end, "Hello, Mr. Ferguson?"

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Bryant was hardly ever on the receiving end of such a tone. When she was with him, Jane was mostly composed and gentle, professionally adept, personally organized. Rarely did she sound so girlish.

In a fluster, Bryant ended the call. His phone slipped from his grasp, thudding softly against the carpet, mirroring his own disarray. He had intended to ask, to confirm her relationship with Gregory. But hearing the happiness in her voice, he couldn't muster the courage to even ask that one question, to seek that one confirmation. He knew he neither dared nor deserved to know. And what would it change anyway? Nothing.

She was wonderful, deserving of anyone's affection. In the end, his sudden realization felt quite insignificant next to Gregory's years of steady loyalty. But luckily, he still had plenty of time. Gregory could wait. So could he. He shamefully thought, as long as they weren't married, he'd have his chance to swoop in.

Alaric couldn't pay attention to York's words, not with such an opportunity before him. Nodding along before hastily leaving the booth, he headed straight in the direction Bryant had gone. His success in business wasn't just due to his girlfriend's connections but also his thick skin and ruthlessness. He caught sight of Bryant, who seemed stunned by some news before driving off without Kevin, even the rain went unnoticed.

Alaric had his suspicions, approaching Kevin with a sly smile. "Kevin, something wrong with Mr. Ferguson? He doesn't seem to be in high spirits."

"It's none of your business," Kevin responded curtly before walking away. Having been by Bryant's side for years, Kevin had his principles. The most important of which: the boss's personal matters were off-limits to outsiders.

Rebuffed, Alaric felt slightly embarrassed but remained eager. He decided to call his girlfriend. "Babe, did your cousin mention anything about Mr. Ferguson?"

"Mr. Ferguson? Bryant?"

"Yeah, that's the one."

"What about him?"

Feeling a lead, Alaric perked up, "Like... anything about Mr. Ferguson's personal life?"

Sensing it was related to romantic affairs, especially given Bryant's reaction, Alaric knew it had to involve a woman of significance. A woman critical to Bryant.

After a moment, the voice on the phone shared, "Bryant's personal life is pretty clean, none of the mess you're imagining."

"No, no, not that," Alaric hurried to clarify, "Isn't Mr. Ferguson famously devoted to his wife? How's their relationship?"

If his personal life was clean, then that woman must be Bryant's wife. Yet, her identity remained largely a mystery.

"Oh! Last I overheard my cousin saying Mr. Ferguson and his wife have divorced. Actually, it was his wife who kicked things off. I'll never understand why she'd leave such a lavish lifestyle..." "Divorced??" Alaric pressed, "When did this happen?"

"Just recently," the voice divulged, adding a gentle warning, "What are you planning? I eavesdropped on this, don't make it widely known and put me in a tough spot."

"Trust me, you know me," Alaric reassured her before probing further, "Do you know what Mrs. Ferguson does?"

"She's the founder of that fashion brand that's been all the rage these past two years, Janedream."

"Janedream... Christine?"

Alaric had met Christine at a business gala. She left an impression. Stunning, dazzling. No wonder she'd propelled Janedream to such fame in a mere couple of years. [Search The website](#) to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

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"That one, not this one."

"The other one?"

Alaric racked his brain, but nothing came to mind. Knowing this was all the information his girlfriend could provide, he decided not to dwell on it. "Alright, got it. Thanks, babe. Love you." After a brief sweet talk, he hung up and called his assistant.

"Look up the founders of Janedream for me. I need their info and pictures."

If he could help Bryant win back his ex-wife, they would surely become VIPS in RF Group. What was there to worry about?

The next day, with Gregory heading back to the Ford estate that evening, I finished Bella's gown but couldn't shake off a sense of unease. Christine, seeing right through me, said, "Your worrying won't help, and do you really think Gregory is the type to make the same mistake twice?" "I'm just concerned..."

"Concerned about what?" Christine chuckled, pulling me down to sit on the couch. "What do you think matters more to Gregory, you or anything else?" Her words left me stunned, but then it started to dawn on me.

Christine laughed softly, "There you go. After all the trouble to win you over, he wouldn't risk it unless he was absolutely sure."

"He's fearless, doesn't even flinch at the devil himself."

"But with a weak spot, it's a different story," Christine added.

Thinking back to what Gregory had said the night before, I began to feel more at ease.

Christine poked my forehead, "You see, it's the lab explosion from two years ago. It's left you with a big shadow in your heart, making you worry over nothing." "Maybe a little."

No one wants to lose what's important to them.

I wished I could stop him. But I knew I couldn't.

He needed to reclaim what belonged to them in the Ford estate for his mother, himself, and Molly Ford.

He had his duties to fulfill.

Christine teased, "If you're that worried, why not drive him there and wait in the car?"

I actually started to consider the feasibility until my phone rang. It was Bella.

I answered, and her voice came through softly, "Jane, what are you up to?"

"Just finished your gown."

I smiled, my attention diverted. "Are you in Vista Town these days? I can bring it over when you're free."

"I am! I just moved, and I've got some free time today. Want to come over and see my new place?"

"Today?" I hesitated but then agreed, "Sure, which neighborhood? I'll bring it over this afternoon."

Bella responded quickly, "Perfect, I've moved to Cloud Villas."

"See you this afternoon."

After hanging up, Christine raised an eyebrow, "I thought you'd at least ask Gregory if he wanted you to accompany him before agreeing." "Gregory said last night he didn't need me to go with him."

Rather than sitting at home worrying, I figured it was better to keep busy to avoid getting anxious.

Besides, being around Bella always seemed to calm me down. Like having a free therapist.

Cloud Villas was a serene and comfortable villa complex nestled away from the hustle and bustle, ensuring privacy. Perfect for Bella.

After checking in at the gate, I drove to Bella's house.

Holding the gown, I rang the bell. Summer answered.

She eyed me, extending her hand, "Just hand over the gown, and you can leave."

I didn't move, offering a polite smile. "Is this coming from Ms. Taylor?"

Bella had mentioned wanting me to see her new place, not to be sent away upon arrival.

Summer replied curtly, "Doesn't matter whose idea it was."

I glanced down, meeting her gaze with a calm, "At the dinner party, you were the one who drugged me, weren't you?"

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Lately, I've been replaying that night over and over in my mind.

The juice was handed to me by the waitress. If I wasn't the intended target, the chances of it landing in my hands were slim. But I hardly knew anyone at the dinner. Bella, Ivy, Bryant. None of them seemed likely. Bella was openly caring towards me, Ivy was her confidant, so drugging me was out of the question. And Bryant, even less likely. That left Summer, the only person I had history with. And I could feel, more or less, the animosity coming from her. Just what she hoped to achieve, I couldn't figure out.

When I voiced the accusation, Summer froze, then looked at me with feigned confusion, "Me, drug you? What drugs?"

I smiled back, "You drugged me, and you don't know with what?"

Truth was, I wasn't sure it was her. Just fishing.

Summer was about to reply when Bella walked over, shooting her a look. "Why didn't you invite Jane in, young lady?"

Summer turned, flashing Bella a sweet smile and saying, "I... I was just so eager to chat with Ms. Webster."

Right then, I knew it. It was her. She was the one who drugged me.

Despite her earlier act of innocence, her reaction in front of Bella gave her away. With her not even wanting me to step through the door, if she wasn't the one who drugged me, she would've used this as an opportunity to clear her name. To let Bella know I was framing her, tarnishing her image. But her first instinct was to smooth things over.

For now, I masked my suspicions, smiling warmly at Bella, "Ms. Taylor, shall we try on the dress?"

"Of course, the dress is a must."

Bella took my hand, ever so friendly, "But first, you must try the cookies I baked."

"Cookies?"

I was pleasantly surprised, joking, "Tasting Ms. Taylor's homemade cookies is definitely worth bragging about on social media."

"Feel free to brag." Bella didn't mind at all.

Her villa had a large front yard adorned with a wall of roses, and the backyard was filled with various fruit trees. It was clear Bella had settled down in Vista Town for her daughter. Stepping into her house, the aroma of freshly baked cookies greeted us. After tasting a couple, I sincerely complimented, "These are delicious, perfectly sweet, much better than store-bought."

"Really?"

Bella beamed, "I'll pack some for you to take home, for your family."

"No, that's not necessary..."

"Why so formal with me? I baked plenty."

"It's not that..."

I explained, "I don't really have a family, or rather..."

I paused, thinking, then continued, "I do have family, but my grandmother is sick in a nursing home, and my father... might as well not be there."

A flicker of sympathy crossed Bella's eyes as she softly asked, "And your mother?"

"My mother..." I smiled helplessly, replying, "I have no idea where she is, or who she is."

...

Meanwhile, in RiverCity, at the Fusion Corp offices.

The assistant knocked and entered, placing a file on Alaric's desk, "Mr. Alaric, here's the information on JaneDream's founder you requested."

"Hmm."

Alaric nodded, flipping through the file, his eyes narrowing slightly. "Jane? She's attractive, sure, but hardly a national beauty. What's got Mr. Ferguson so bewitched?"

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"Graduated from a top university, really impressive resume," the assistant remarked.

But what he didn't realize was that he had only uncovered Jane's domestic resume.

Alaric was unimpressed. "What's the use of a resume? The Ferguson family has a long-standing legacy. Do we really need a wife's resume to boost our image?"

The assistant speculated, "Maybe Mr. Ferguson just likes her type?"

Men have their preferences, after all. Some like red roses, others prefer gardenias.

This got Alaric thinking as he flipped through the files, "She's in Vista Town now, right?"

"Yes."

"Let's go, then."

Alaric grabbed his car keys and stood up, ready to rush out the door. Every minute wasted was a minute closer to losing the project to a competitor, and he was determined to win.

"Mr. Alaric," the assistant hesitated, "the people there... we can't afford to offend them either."

Alaric paused, "What do you mean?"

It's just the founder of Janedream. And he wasn't going to do anything drastic, just persuade or possibly coerce Jane into coming back to RiverCity to continue being Mrs. Ferguson.

The assistant handed him a phone with a new message, "Do you know who owns the house Jane is staying in Vista Town?"

"Who?"

Seeing the message, Alaric slapped his thigh in frustration, "A Ford? Wasn't he supposed to be dead two years ago? Even if Jane had something to do with him, am I supposed to be scared of a dead man?" "There are rumors he's not dead," the assistant continued. "SZ Technology, that's his."

Alaric's vision darkened, "What? Is this reliable?"

"It seems reliable; it came from our partners in Vista Town."

After the assistant finished, he asked, "So... maybe we shouldn't go after Jane?"

"Let's go!"

With narrowed eyes, Alaric strode out.

Relationships that afford living arrangements can be complex.

A patriarch like Ford isn't known for passing the buck.

Rather than being a secret mistress, being officially brought into the family as Mrs. Ferguson would surely be a more stable position.

...

When I shared this with Bella, she seemed surprised. But having seen her fair share of tough times, she quickly regained her composure.

"So, your father has been treating you poorly since you were a child?"

"Not exactly."

I'm usually not keen on discussing my past, but around her, I felt an unusual sense of openness, "Actually, my parents adored me as a child. It was only in the last few years that I discovered I was adopted." "Were you lost as a child?"

"Not exactly."

I shook my head, a bitter taste in my mouth, "At the time, it seems I was kidnapped by my biological father's current wife. I managed to escape, and my adoptive parents saved me... After that, some events caused me to lose many years of memories."

Bella tensed up, as if struck by a thought. "She kidnapped you, and your father did nothing?"

"I don't know why..."

I hesitated, "It seems my biological father wasn't too fond of me either. Perhaps it had something to do with my biological mother."

Bella spoke with sympathy, "Have you ever thought about looking for her?"

"Of course, I have." I sighed softly. "But I don't even know where to start. I even lost the only thing she left me."

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Despite having thought about it, I still felt uneasy. What if I actually found her? Would it be like I imagined? She might have already built a family, had kids, living a happy and fulfilled life. My sudden appearance could just be a pebble disrupting her peaceful life. Plus, I lost the pendant two years ago. Trying to find her now seemed more difficult than finding a needle in a haystack.

Unexpectedly, Bella offered, "I can help you, whether you want to search publicly or privately, it's up to you."

I was surprised. "Really?"

"Of course." Bella nodded, her gaze briefly drifting towards Summer, who was blending smoothies in the kitchen. Her eyes were tender, radiating an unmistakable motherly warmth. "If someone had offered to help me find my daughter sooner, maybe I could have reunited with her earlier."

"You and Summer..." I hesitated, "Were separated before?"

If that was the case... I couldn't help but doubt whether Summer truly was Bella's daughter.

Two years ago, she was involved in some shady dealings with the Myers family. And now, it wasn't out of the question that she'd be here trying to deceive Bella as well.

Bella didn't hide anything, her smile fading as she spoke with a hint of sorrow, "Yeah, she was switched at birth just two days after she was born."

"Who switched her?"

"We haven't found out yet." Bella sighed.

I asked softly, "What about the child you were given?"

"It was a stillborn."

Hearing this, I was momentarily stunned. Bella then spoke with self-reproach, "After that, and a series of other events, I left Vista Town and moved to North City. If I had known she was switched at birth, I would never have left Vista Town. I would have done everything to find her."

"It's not your fault," I consoled her, "The blame lies with the person who switched the babies."

"Let's not talk about me now. At least, I've found my daughter now," Bella said with a smile, appearing somewhat relieved. "Let's talk about you. Are you from Vista Town or RiverCity?"

"Vista Town." I pursed my lips, "From the Myers family of Vista Town."

"Clang "The glass Bella was holding shattered on the floor, tea splashing everywhere. She was visibly shaken, "You're a Myers from Vista Town? One of the four big families?"

"...Yes."

"Your father is Victor?"

"Yes, that's him."

Seeing her so knowledgeable, I couldn't help but ask, "You... know the Myers family?"

"Not at all!" She answered abruptly, quickly bending down to clean up the mess. But somehow, she cut her finger in the process.

I rushed to grab some tissues, pressing them against the wound, "Do you have band-aids?"

"No need." Bella suddenly became distant, stepping back, "It's getting late. You should head home. I'll message you about the dress later."

I was somewhat perplexed but knew better than to overstay my welcome, "Alright, then I'll be going."

Just as I was about to leave, I turned to her, "Oh, Ms. Taylor, there's something I think you should know."

"Go on."

I carefully began, "Two years ago, Summer had..."

"Ms. Webster!" Summer came over with two glasses of smoothie, handing one to me with a bright smile. "Were you about to tell my mom how we met two years ago?" Then, she handed the other glass to Bella, sweetly saying, "Here you go, Mom!"

I chuckled, "Yes, that was the plan."

"If my mom's interested, I'll tell her about it," Summer winked, leaning on Bella's shoulder playfully, "Ms. Webster, please don't deprive me of a conversation topic with my mom." With the conversation heading in this direction, it wasn't my place to say more. Moreover, after Bella heard I was from the Myers family, she seemed to become somewhat wary.

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No matter how much I talked, she probably wouldn't choose to believe me over her "own daughter," Summer.

I set the juice down on the coffee table and grabbed my bag. "Ms. Taylor, sorry for the intrusion today."

It wasn't until Summer left the living room that Bella finally let herself relax. A wave of loathing washed over her once again. But as she calmed down, a nagging suspicion gripped her. She picked up her phone and dialed Ivy.

"Amy, could you do me a favor and dig into something for me? Find out if there was any bad blood between Chloe and Jane two years ago."

Jane's demeanor earlier wasn't that of someone making casual conversation. It felt more like a warning.

"Sure thing," Ivy responded quickly, her curiosity piqued. "What's up? Why the sudden interest?"

"I'm not quite sure yet," Bella admitted, then added, "And... when is Jane's birthday?"

She couldn't make sense of it yet, but her instincts told her to look into it.

Ivy was silent for a moment before replying, "I've actually already looked that up. She shares a birthday with Chloe."

Anyone who might get close to Bella, Ivy made a point to do a little background check on them. A little knowledge never hurt.

Hearing this, Bella froze. "The same day?"

"Yeah."

Bella's thoughts grew more chaotic. Suddenly she said, "Check which hospital she was born in."

"She's from Southaven, why does it matter?" Ivy asked, puzzled.

"No," Bella shook her head. "Her adoptive parents are from Southaven, but she was born in Vista Town."

Bella's tone grew serious. "She's Victor's daughter!"

In the evening, at the Ford Residence, the house was always lively during family dinners.

Gregory skidded to a stop in his black Pagani, making a grand entrance at the front door. As he stepped out, the harmonious atmosphere shattered. Everyone's thoughts were elsewhere. Adah Ford was overjoyed, grabbing Gregory by the ear. "You little rascal, finally decided to come home, huh?!"

"Grandma!" Gregory laughed, casually glancing at Klein and Palmer, his smile tinged with mockery. "Whether I want to come back is one thing, whether some people want me back is another." "What are you talking about?" Klein was displeased. "This is your home. Who would stop you from coming back?"

"Oh?" Gregory raised an eyebrow, turning to Palmer with a casual tone. "Since it's my home, I suppose it's no problem if I tell him to leave, right?"

To those in the know, Gregory had been set up and nearly lost his life, returning home for the first time in two years. To the uninformed, it was as if he ruled the place. As always, bold and assertive. Palmer adjusted his glasses, unfazed. "Bro, we're all part of the Ford family. Why make things ugly?"

Gregory didn't give him the time of day and addressed Klein directly. "If he leaves, I'll take over the Ford Group's AI project."

Meaning, Palmer could take a hike. The Ford family could save billions! To Klein, it was a no-brainer. After all, Palmer was just a bastard child. Disposable.

Unexpectedly, Klein scoffed. "And what are you going to use to turn it around? Besides, we've already found a way to continue with the project."

Gregory smirked. "Which is?"

"We're partnering with RF Group."

Palmer chimed in directly, "I suppose Mr. Ferguson from RF would love nothing more than to see you dead right now."

After all, stealing someone's wife is no different from slapping them in the face. Successfully stealing their wife is like slapping them in the face every single day. Bryant couldn't possibly swallow that bitter pill.

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Gregory's face remained unchanged, his smile growing even more mocking. "You're so sure that Bryant will team up with you?"

"He might not want to team up with me."

Palmer was confident. "But if teaming up with me means he can take down you, his rival in love, why wouldn't he?"

Bryant didn't even have to lift a finger himself. Just handing Palmer a contract would be enough. Palmer would become Bryant's weapon, forcing Gregory into a corner. Palmer thought to himself, sure, SZ Technology has made waves for just over two years, but compared to RF Group, they're still small fry.

Gregory chuckled coldly, "Hold your horses before you boast, or you'll end up having to grin and bear it when things go south."

"What do you mean?"

"I've got news you haven't heard yet."

Gregory, lounging on the couch, leisurely informed the Ford family, "SZ Technology and RF Group just signed a strategic partnership."

He crossed his legs, tapping his knee absentmindedly, the picture of calm. "The deal was sealed this morning. No wonder you haven't heard."

"What?!"

Klein's face went pale! He glared at Palmer, furious, "Are you useless? How could you miss such critical information?!"

The partnership between SZ Technology and RF Group signified one thing: The Ford Group's AI project was doomed!

He had been so pleased with Palmer's performance over the past two years, ready to hand over the reins completely! And now, this incompetence.

Palmer, although taken aback, tried to keep his composure. "Dad, don't just take his word for it! With the animosity between them, Mr. Ferguson supporting SZ Technology over us seems unlikely!"

At this point, the RF and Gregory partnership was essentially RF backing SZ Technology unilaterally. Impossible. What man would help his ex-wife's current partner? Madness.

But Klein, unable to stay calm any longer, didn't care about ruining the family dinner, "You two, upstairs with me now!"

This wasn't just about a potential billion-dollar loss. It was about the Ford Group's prospects for the next decade. In today's competitive world, one project's failure could mean falling behind forever.

"I'll pass." Gregory remained seated, indifferent to Klein's anger. "I've only got half an hour. After that, even if you tried to hand over the Ford Group to me, I wouldn't take it."

He had a new bride at home who would worry if he was late! Still, his words were a tough pill for Klein to swallow.

Klein exploded, "What kind of attitude is that?! Two years out there and you think you can disrespect me like this?!" Gregory just laughed, unconcerned. "And what if I do?"

A father who favored a bastard son over him, taking everything from Gregory. Now, what right did he have to expect any respect?

In Gregory's eyes, respect was earned through kindness and love. Without that, it didn't matter if you were his father or Confucius; you had no right to demand anything from him. He was ready to cut ties if necessary. After all, a crooked beam leads to a skewed house.

Klein, fuming, smashed a teacup, bellowing, "Gregory! How did the Ford family raise such an ungrateful son..."

"Wait, hold up."

Gregory interrupted calmly, a smirk on his face that begged to be wiped off. "Don't jump to conclusions. Who knows, maybe the Ford Group will end up needing this 'ungrateful son' after all?"

"You!"

"Dad..." Palmer, steeling himself, pulled Klein upstairs. Their primary concern now was to verify the truth behind Gregory's claims.

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The silence in the living room was deafening. Klein had left, but Gregory, the prodigal son, was still very much present. The Fords had always tread lightly around him, and today's debacle had only solidified their caution.

Adah shot Gregory a reproachful look. "You scoundrel, have you even checked on your grandfather? He's been looking forward to your visit!" Ever since Paul suffered a heart attack two years ago, his health had declined significantly. Family gatherings like this had become rare occasions for him. Today, knowing Gregory might make an appearance, Adah and Mrs. Ford, fearing another clash with Klein, had kept the news from Paul. Paul had thus stayed away from the gathering.

Gregory's earlier defiance seemed to melt away as he quickly stood, obediently saying, "Alright, I'll go now." Molly, who had been quietly observing from the side, quickly added, "Brother, I'll come with you."

Inside the Ford Residence study.

No sooner had Gregory stepped in than Klein kicked Palmer out of the way! Frustration etched across his face, Klein barked, "What are you waiting for? Get in touch with RF Group immediately and get to the bottom of this!"

"Yes, sir!" Palmer, seemingly impervious to the pain, quickly got to his feet, pulled out his phone, and dialed Kevin.

Kevin picked up almost instantly. "Who's this?"

Hearing this, Palmer clenched his teeth, but his voice betrayed no irritation, "Kevin, it's Palmer from the Ford Group." This wasn't the first time Palmer had contacted Kevin. Kevin, having worked closely with Bryant for many years and mastering the art of networking, always managed to maintain his position. Yet, Kevin would always ask, "Who's this?" every time Palmer called. As if he hadn't remembered him at all. But that was impossible. It meant Kevin simply didn't regard him highly enough to remember!

Kevin, ever aloof, greeted him with a

cold, "Hello." Palmer, masking his emotions, continued politely, "I've heard that your company and SZ Technology are planning a

partnership?" He didn't directly ask if the partnership was already in place because, in his heart, he couldn't believe it to be true.

"The walls do have ears, it seems." Kevin chuckled. "It's not a plan. We've already partnered up and will be announcing it officially at a press conference in a few days." After hanging up, Palmer's face was ashen, speechless.

Klein demanded, "Well? What's the situation?" "What Gregory said... it's true."

Slap! Klein's hand struck Palmer, sending his glasses flying. Klein glared at him furiously, "If you don't have the skills, don't take on the job. What did you promise me when you joined the Ford Group?!"

Klein had always found Gregory's

methods too ostentatious, hard to predict and control. That's why he had backed Palmer for the position. Tasting blood in his mouth, Palmer's eyes darkened with resentment, was careless this time. Give me another chance..." He was

determined not to lose to Gregory again.

"You want another chance?" Klein, spitting with rage, interrupted, "Go ask Gregory if he'd give you another chance! Useless, both of you come from the Ford bloodline, yet why is the gap between you so vast??" With that stinging rebuke, Klein stormed off!

For now, he had no choice but to rely on that ungrateful son to stabilize the situation. Once the AI project was secure, he'd dispose of him just like two years ago.

Gregory, having visited his

grandfather, was leisurely sitting on the couch, watching Klein come downstairs, and asked with a smile, "So, Mr President, have you made up your mind?" Klein, still unable to let go of his pride, conceded, "What you said earlier, I agree!"

"You agree?" Gregory subtly raised an eyebrow, stood up, and adjusted his sleeves. "Mr. President, hasn't anyone taught you how to properly ask for a favor?"

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Tensions were as high as a standoff at high noon.

Anyone with half an eye could see that Klein was about to lose it. But then again, this was a gathering of the Fords. Wasn't it public knowledge that there was bad blood between father and son? Disrespect from the young, lack of affection from the old. The apple didn't fall far from the tree, it seemed. Some might say it's in the genes. But as Adah liked to put it, it was a case of every dog having its day. Klein, being the only son of the Ford legacy, should've known better than to lead a life of scandal if he didn't want Gregory to dismiss him outright. Adah was all for Gregory putting his father in his place. Just when everyone thought Klein would explode, he stepped forward, slapped Gregory on the back, and with a grin said, "You little rascal, alright, daddy's begging you here, help your brother clean up this mess, will ya?"

"...Brother?" Gregory sneered, his gaze icy as he looked towards Mrs. Ford. "Mom, when did you give me a brother?"

Mrs. Ford was the epitome of grace and virtue, understanding her son was standing up for her yet not wanting another fallout. She gently intervened, "Greg, let it go."

As for Hanson Ford, she had lost all hope in him long ago. It wasn't just about the lost love; it was a marriage of convenience from the start. She stayed true to the Fords, not just out of lingering feelings but because her family's fortunes had waned and needed the Ford's support. And, of course, she couldn't abandon her children. The only time she ever really clashed with Hanson was over that laboratory explosion. Palmer had just joined Ford Enterprises. And her son had nearly paid the price.

Now, with her son back, she reverted to her usual reticence, sparing any unnecessary words with Hanson.

Knowing his mother's temperament all too well, Gregory chuckled before turning his icy gaze back to Hanson. "Mom asked me to let it go, but you know me, I don't turn a blind eye to deceit."

Both men stood their ground, but Gregory seemed to tower over Hanson in presence. Two years had sharpened him considerably. Glancing towards the direction of the upstairs study, Gregory's voice was calm but firm, "If you want me to clean up this mess at Ford Enterprises, fine, but your illegitimate show-off needs to hit the road. Far away."

Playing dress-up for someone else? Not his style.

Hanson's eyes flickered, "Greg, he's still a Ford by blood."

Gregory's gaze turned icy as he tossed a dossier over, "Take a look at this first."

"What's this?" As Hanson flipped through it, his face paled. "You...how did you find...?"

"It's not important how I found it. What matters is, what do you think the police would make of this?"

The dossier was filled with evidence from the explosion two years back, all pointing to Palmer. Attempted murder, enough to put Palmer away for a long stretch.

Adah couldn't help but want a peek, "Let me see that, Watson."

"Mom! It's nothing important, better you don't."

Hanson clenched his teeth, his demeanor turning surprisingly

conciliatory, "Fine, you call the

I only handed Ford Enterprises him because I thought you were gone. Now that you're back, it's rightfully yours. Time for irrelevant people to take a hike!"

A hike was better than jail time. And if things went south, it could drag him down too. But his reaction also indirectly confirmed his awareness of the explosion two years prior.

Disappointment flickered in Gregory's eyes, yet he wasn't surprised. He almost praised, "Typical of you, always knowing what stakes to play."