

# Lost Me Gained Regret #Chapter 61 - Read Lost Me Gained Regret Chapter 61

Chapter 61

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My heart skipped a beat, then quickly descended into a familiar chaos I couldn't tame. I took a deep breath, continuing, "Moving in here? I don't recall agreeing to that."

"Grandpa mentioned you agreed to put the divorce on hold," he retorted, pushing his phone towards me as if it were a peace offering. "Why don't you tell him yourself?"

"Jerk," I couldn't help but glare at him. "Agreeing to wait on the divorce doesn't mean I agreed to you moving in."

The CEO of Ferguson Group resorting to such tactics, who would believe it?

"Isn't it only natural for a married couple to live together?" he replied, smoothly as ever.

"Bullshit." I muttered under my breath, making my way into the house, with him following closely behind without an ounce of hesitation.

Perhaps it was the recollection of what Timothy had shared with me earlier that evening, or maybe a sudden wave of pity towards Bryant, but I couldn't bring myself to kick him out.

Instead, I simply pointed towards a room opposite the master bedroom, "You can stay there."

"Okay, sure."

He didn't push any further, accepting my offer with a mild temperament and carried his luggage into the room.

I got myself a glass of ice water and had barely set the glass down when I bumped into a broad, warm chest. It was a familiar yet nostalgic scent.

Yet, I quickly stepped back, slightly flustered, "Anything else?"

We felt more like strangers than a married couple, and it was precisely this distance that! needed to maintain.

To remind myself, "Jane, you're not the one he cherishes."

A hint of sadness flickered across his face as he pressed his lips together, "I was just wondering how your face is. Has it gotten any better?"

"I don't know," I replied offhandedly.

I hadn't even thought to check in the mirror all night.

It wasn't until he mentioned it that I remembered.

He raised his hand, "Let me see."

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"That's okay." I instinctively dodged, "I'll take care of it myself."

"Jane, are we really going to be this distant now?" he frowned.

"It's not like that." I replied.

My mind flashed back to him and Margaret at the police station, so close and intimate. My gaze fell to his sleeve as I spoke indifferently, "I just find it disgusting."

I did love him, that was true.

But the Bryant I fell in love with was pure and proud, not someone who's just rolled out of another woman's bed trying to comfort me.

"Well... at least remember to apply some ointment," he said, his hand pausing mid-air, his fingers curling slightly.

It was the first time I saw him look so awkward.

Back in my room, reflecting on that moment, a mix of sourness and pity swirled within

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Yet, looking up at the mirror and seeing the stark red marks on my face after removing my makeup, I found my reason to harden my heart again.

He probably didn't defend Margaret earlier just to prevent me from bringing it up to Timothy.

After all, he's always been considerate towards Margaret.

Unable to enjoy dinner at the family gathering and feeling famished after a shower, I couldn't focus on my book. Peering through the door crack, I noticed the living room lights were still on.

Not wanting to face Bryant, I hesitated but eventually gave in to my hunger. Thinking he might have forgotten to turn off the lights, I ordered delivery with a note to leave it hanging on the door, avoiding any doorbell rings.

Unexpectedly, as I tiptoed out after seeing the delivery notification, I ran straight into Bryant working in the open office area.

Fresh from a shower, he wore a navy blue pajama set, looking effortlessly handsome his wet hair adding to his e

ature. Removing his gold-rimmed glasses, he massaged the bridge of his nose before approaching me, "Hungry?"

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"No, not at all."

I scrambled for an excuse, "I was just grabbing something."

"That something?"

He gestured towards a delivery bag sitting on the dining table.

Feeling the awkwardness of being caught in a lie, I touched my nose, "Didn't I tell the delivery guy not to ring the bell?" "He didn't ring the bell."

"Then how did you know?"

"He knocked."

I was speechless, internally cursing the delivery guy's cleverness.

Walking over, I started to unpack the bag, ready to dig in, when Bryant placed a steaming bowl of seafood chowder in front of me..

“Grandpa said you didn’t eat much tonight, had the leftover seafood sent over.” “And the chowder...?” “I made it.”

Sitting across me, Bryant’s face was serious, his voice calm and cool, “I took a shower before I cooked. You’ve been feeling under the weather, try to cut down on the takeout.”

His words stopped me in my tracks, leaving me surprised.

He was telling me that he’d cleaned up, wasn’t “dirty” anymore before he made the chowder, so I wouldn’t find it disgusting. I bowed my head, the steam from the chowder blurring my vision, and took several bites before I could compose myself. “Bryant, you really don’t have to do this.”

It made me hesitant.

I hate indecision the most, don’t want to become someone like that.

Suddenly, a hand reached out, tucking a strand of hair behind my ear, his cool fingertips grazing my earlobe.

“Shouldn’t partners look out for each other?” After saying that, he urged, “Eat up.”

For a moment, it felt as if we had returned to our old days.

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He was still that gentle and considerate husband.

Looking up, I met his piercing gaze, “But, I only agreed to a month for Timothy’s sake.” “Just this month, then.”

His gaze was deep and lingering. “In the past, it was always you taking care of me, taking care of Grandpa. This month, let me take good care of you, fulfill my duties as a husband?”

My heart stirred, but I remained silent. I couldn’t agree, nor could I bear to refuse. Logic didn’t allow it, yet my emotions desperately clung to this scant warmth. In the heavy yet delicate atmosphere, Bryant seemed to carefully choose his words, his voice hoarse, as if sandpapered.

“From the start, I never believed we reached a point where divorce was the only option, I never agreed to it.”

| abruptly tightened my grip on the spoon, and when | eoked. mea him again, loreed rhyself to appear calm

“We've been secretly married for so long, but your first love can openly come and go with you. One-phons call ANd ae, diseppea wnat am | tHer,'someone who has to hide in the shadows? You can talk like that because in this marriage, amidst all our differences, you've never been on the receiving end of pain.

Despite my best efforts to control it, my voice broke towards the end. He looked momentarily surprised, then fell silent, “Jane...”

“Let's not talk anymore.”

| hurriedly finished the rest of the chowder and fled.

Back in my room, my heart wouldn't settle. Just as | w bout to Pal” agleep, Hc thbu

of him being just beyond the wall stirred my mind again. Indecisive and tangled. That pretty much summed up where we stood now.

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Ever since I found out I was pregnant, my sleep had never been worse.

I kept telling myself he was just my ex-husband, but feelings, as it turned out, aren't something can control.

The next morning, with dark circles under my eyes, I was about to leave for work when Bryant stopped me in the foyer.

He was decked out in a fitted iron-grey suit that added to his unapproachable vibe but also made him more eye-catching because of his good looks and build.

He handed me a thermal bag without waiting for my response, his voice cool, "Take breakfast with you."

"Okay."

I didn't refuse and took it gracefully. It saved me the trouble of buying breakfast, and considering he's the father of the child I'm carrying, eating a breakfast he provided didn't seem too much.

Seeing my reaction, a barely noticeable smile touched the corners of his mouth. "I'm heading to the office too. Let's go together."

"Maybe not. It's better to avoid any awkwardness, in case your darling decides to confront me."

"She won't."

"So, you admit she's your darling now?" My tone was unavoidably sarcastic. After saying that, I walked out the door and entered the elevator.

In the underground parking lot, the familiar black Maybach was parked right beside my car.

I forced myself to ignore it, got into my own car, and was about to start it when Kevin, all smiles, knocked on my window.

He had always been nice to me, and it wasn't fair to take out my frustration with Bryant on him.

So I rolled down the window. "Kevin, what's up?"

"Mrs. Ferguson, good morning."

Kevin's face was the picture of eagerness, quickly replaced by an embarrassed but polite smile. "Uh, I think I ran over a nail earlier, and my tire's flat. Could I possibly catch a ride with you? You know how hard it is to get a cab during the morning rush..."

I chuckled, "Hop in."

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"I'll drive. Didn't you hurt your foot the other night? You should rest." "Alright then."

I smoothly got out and let him take the driver's seat, settling myself in the back. As I buckled up, it struck me. "How did you know I hurt my foot the other night?" "I was with Mr... cough!"

Kevin stopped mid-sentence as he saw Bryant, stone-faced, coming out of the building, nearly choking on his own saliva, coughing repeatedly.

Then, he turned to me with pitiful eyes, "I forgot to mention, Mr. Ferguson will be joining us in your car."

"...Okay." I hesitated for a moment before agreeing.

Before Kevin could say anything to Bryant, the latter had already smoothly opened the back door of the car and got in.

"What you said back at the house was incorrect."

"What?"

He leaned in as he got into the car, his posture relaxed, "The last word."

I frowned, trying to remember what I had said, until the car moved out of the parking lot, and it suddenly came back to me.

My heart skipped a beat, and I glanced at him, "What about it?"

Asking the question made my heart race even faster, filled with anticipation.

"I never admitted to that." His voice was deep and succinct.

I couldn't tell if I should be relieved or disappointed, and I let my gaze fall. "Okay."

The conversation ended there. His interference made it awkward to ask Kevin what I wanted to.

We used to arrive at the office together, and he would always have Kevin stop the car in a discreet spot so I could get out first, to keep people from knowing I was his wife.

Today, I was all set to get off as usual, but the car went straight ahead, without showing any signs of stopping.

Puzzled, I looked at Bryant, only to find his deep gaze fixed on me.

Before I could speak, he asked in a low, clear voice, "Why are you looking at me?"

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"How do you know I'm looking at you if you don't look at me?"

"I'm looking at my wife, as I rightly should." He shamelessly threw out that line.

The question I had wanted to ask got stuck in my throat.

The Ferguson Group building towered above, its dense glass facades glinting like diamond cuts, shimmering with the morning sun.

Kevin parked the car under the portico, and I practically jumped out, eager to escape the brewing storm.

"Jane, good morning!" Linda suddenly appeared from not too far off, greeting me with an infectious energy.

I managed a smile, grabbing her arm to hurry along, "Good morning. Let's go, it's freezing." "Jane, you forgot your breakfast." Behind us, Bryant stepped out of the car, calling out to

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Taking a deep breath, I turned to take the breakfast, keeping my distance, "Thanks, Mr. Ferguson."

"Jane, are you and Mr. Ferguson..."

Linda hooked her arm with mine, leaning in with a mischievous wink, "When did you two get together? Don't tell me you're Mr. Ferguson's secret wife!"

"No..."

I didn't want to stir up any drama before the divorce, especially not something that might reach Margaret and cause who knows what, so I instinctively denied it.

In the midst of our conversation, Bryant, with his long strides, had already passed by us.

Linda's words, undoubtedly, had reached his ears in full.

Yet, he said nothing to refute it.

Linda's eyes widened. Once the exclusive elevator doors closed behind him, she gasped, "Jane, your denial is useless now, Mr. Ferguson himself has confirmed it!"

"When did he confirm anything?"

"Silence is the loudest form of admission!"

I felt helpless, increasingly finding it impossible to argue with the young fresh-out-of-college.



But Linda knew when to stop. Once in the elevator, she kept quiet.

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It wasn't until we were in my office that she resumed her relentless gossip.

"Jane, I can hardly believe I'm working right under the nose of the Ferguson Group's CEO's wife!"

"Did you really get married three years ago? Do you have any children?" "Well, it makes sense. He often frosts your office glass the moment he steps in. I can't believe I never picked up on your close relationship!"

My head began to ache, "Linda..."

She jumped, "Mrs. Ferguson, you were saying?"

I couldn't help but chuckle, "Make me a cup of coffee, please. And don't call me that."

"Right away!"

She darted off, her steps bold and confident, and soon returned with a steaming cup of coffee.

Leaning over my desk, she tried to butter me up, "Jane, could you get tickets to Eason's concert?"

Eason was a hugely popular singer, his concert tickets typically sold out in a flash, gone within seconds of going on sale.

His upcoming concert in RiverCity was sponsored by a fast-moving consumer goods brand under the Ferguson Group, so the company should have some internal tickets.

I was surprised, "You like Eason too?"

"Yeah, do you?"

"Yeah, especially during my college days. His songs were all I listened to."

I smiled ruefully, promising her, "Go back to work, I'll see what I can do about the tickets."

After Linda left, I opened the lunch bag, only to find not just breakfast inside but also a small jewelry box, with a sticky note attached.

"Jane, happy 8th anniversary"

I glanced at the calendar, momentarily stunned.

So, he remembered too.

Today was the anniversary of the day we met.

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That made my mind wander all morning long.

It felt like there were two little figures brawling inside my head.

One argued, "Look, he does care after all. He even remembers the first day we met."

The other retorted, "Come on, he recently forgot you even went to RiverCity University. - How could he remember that day? He probably asked Steven or someone. Don't get all lovesick!"

By noon, I shook off these cluttered thoughts and asked Christine if she wanted to join me for lunch in the cafeteria.

We used to order takeout or dine out quite a bit. But lately, I couldn't be bothered to walk an extra step, and takeout just wasn't as fresh or clean as the cafeteria's offerings. So, we practically made the cafeteria our new haunt.

Heading towards the office area, I wasn't sure who had brought their packed lunch, but the smell suddenly made me queasy, and I found myself dashing to the restroom.

After emptying my stomach until it hurt and the bitter taste lingered in my mouth, I finally straightened up, leaning against the wall for support.

I never imagined pregnancy could be this tough.

Yet, thinking of the tiny life inside me made it all seem worthwhile.

"You're throwing up again?"

I thought everyone would be out for lunch at this time, but as I exited, there stood Margaret by the sink.

My heart raced. If she found out about my pregnancy, she wouldn't let it go.

If this reached Bryant, I wouldn't stand a chance in a custody battle.

I tried to mask my nervousness, replying casually, "I told you, my stomach's been acting up. Isn't vomiting normal then? You seem to have plenty of free time, standing here listening to me puke."

"Is it really just a stomach issue?" She grilled me, her eyes brimming with deep distrust and threat.

"What else could it be?"

"It better be."

She seemed half-convinced.

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As I finished washing my hands and was about to leave, Margaret suddenly said, "Jane, you're not pregnant, are you?"

My heart nearly stopped, but I forced a smile, replying calmly. "If I were pregnant, would! be divorcing Bryant and letting you have him?"

That seemed to reassure her. "That's true." she said.

Then she warned me scornfully, "You'd better be smart and finalize the divorce soon. Don't cling to Bry."

"Okay."

Normally, I would have snapped back, but every second with her made me fear slipping

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Dropping the word, I walked away.

Christine had already snagged us a spot in the cafeteria. When I brought over our meals, she immediately noticed something was off.

"You look pale. What's up?"

"How did I never notice your keen detective skills before?" I laughed, easing the tension as I briefly shared what happened.

Christine arched an eyebrow, "She's still nosy about your pregnancy? Seems she doesn't know everyone's already calling her the other woman."

"When did this happen?"

"Just this morning. Didn't you arrive at work with Bryant? Word spread fast. Lots of folks are guessing who the real deal is between you two, and most are betting on you, waiting to see her embarrassment."

She scrutinized me, "Speaking of which, why did you come to work with him? Spill the beans."

I sighed, "He moved into Riverview Estate last night."

Christine was baffled, "He's not suddenly having a change of heart, is he? Planning some grand 'winning the wife back' scheme, is he?"

I didn't know what to say.

I could have given her a definitive answer last night, but now I was starting to doubt myself.

Bryant's intentions were becoming harder to decipher.

Christine shook her head in despair,

"It's over, it's all over. You won't stand a chance if he pulls a few more stunts like that. You'll be head over heels."

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"I won't." I gave a bitter smile, "Don't worry, there's still Margaret. She won't allow it to happen."

"That all depends on what Bryant m

decides. Don't be fooled by his easy-going appearance he can be ruthlessly decisive. If he wants to shake off Margaret, that's just a matter of time."

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"He won't hurt Margaret," I said, shaking my head with a mix of resolve and resignation.

That would only happen if he ever found out the real reason behind his mother's death. Maybe then, just maybe, he'd change his attitude towards Margaret.

But until that day, it seemed nearly impossible.

Speaking of which, it baffled me why Timothy never spilled the beans to Bryant. I guess a trip back to the Ferguson Mansion was overdue to finally get some answers.

Near the end of lunch, I steered the conversation back on track, "By the way, Chris, did you manage to snag those concert tickets?"

Christine had far more connections within the company than I did.

When the concert was announced, I immediately asked her to help me get tickets.

Christine pointed upwards, rolling her eyes, "For some reason, this time tickets are exclusively available through the CEO's office. Everyone got just one; no extras."

"Only from the CEO's office?"

"Yeah. If you really want them, why not ask Bryant while he's trying to win you over? He could probably get you as many as you want."

"I'd rather not."

Keeping a clear boundary between Bryant and me seemed for the best.

Though, that was merely my side of things.

No sooner had I returned to my office than Bryant's call came through.

I walked over to the window to answer, greeted by his magnetic voice on the other end.

"Are you free Saturday night? Want to go to a concert together?"

"You've got extra tickets, huh?"

I wasn't going to ask, but if it was offered, I had to consider Linda.

"Yes."

"Can I get two tickets?" Linda would likely want to bring a friend; better safe than sorry.

"I'll have Kevin bring them down to you."

"Alright."

"And you?"

"What?"

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"I've answered two of your questions. You haven't answered any of mine," he said, his voice dropping lower.

Caught off-guard, I replied softly. "I'm free."

The years I spent loving without being loved back were underscored by Eason's music.

Now, attending this concert with him felt like a formal goodbye, a respectful and graceful end to my eight years of one-sided love.

Moving back in with Bryant wasn't as comfortable as it had been in our earlier days. Rekindling a relationship isn't as simple as piecing back a broken mirror.

Fortunately, Bryant's work kept him busy, often out late.

He'd leave before I woke and return after I'd gone to bed.

One night, I was startled awake by incessant doorbell ringing. Peering through the peephole, I saw Kevin struggling to support a tall, imposing figure: Bryant.

His eyes were half-closed, a bit dazed, but his jawline was as sharp as ever, emitting an even more daunting aura than when sober.

Had he been drinking?

I opened the door, "Had too much to drink?"

"No," Kevin replied quickly, "Mr. Ferguson mentioned you've been avoiding alcohol lately, so he's been drinking less at social events."

Kevin, usually so easygoing, looked visibly upset, "He only had one drink tonight but someone messed with it. My fault for not watching out."

"Who would pull such a dirty trick?" I frowned.

Such low blows weren't uncommon in the business world, but given Bryant's status, it was a bold move.

"It was..." Kevin started to explain, but Bryant, lifting his eyelids slightly interrupted in a hoarse voice, a clear warning, "Kevin."

He didn't want me involved.

I didn't push further and helped Kevin get him to the couch. Even through his clothes, I could feel his feverish heat, which alarmed me.

"Why didn't you take him to the hospital?"

Kevin touched his nose awkwardly, "Mr. Ferguson insisted on not falling into another trap, said he had to come back to you."

To me? As someone on the verge of becoming his ex-wife, I wondered what use I could be.

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With a sigh, I asked, "Did you call the family doctor?"

"No, he's out of the country this week, and Mr. Ferguson doesn't trust the other doctors."

"Mrs. Ferguson, sorry to trouble you."

Before I could respond, Kevin left me with those words, heavy with implication, and made a quick exit.

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Someone messing with his drink was a nice way to put it. In reality, he was drugged with something sinister, something that toyed with human desires in the cruelest ways.

Given Bryant's reputation for being ruthlessly decisive in the business world, whoever did this to him was in for a world of hurt once he sobered up. But that was a problem for tomorrow.

Right now, I was terrified he wouldn't make it through the night. His face was unnaturally flushed, a clear sign of the drug coursing through him.

Caught in a dilemma, the ringing of my phone on the bedroom dresser felt like a lifeline. The caller ID flashed urgently, and I snatched it up.

"Sweetie, guess what? I scored us tickets! Steven had them but-

"Chris!" I blurted out, cutting her off mid-sentence. "Do you know what to do if someone's been...uh, drugged? With that kind of drug?"

"What kind of drug?"

"An aphrodisiac." I could barely get the words out.

I could almost hear Christine choking on her drink, coughing in surprise. "Cough, why the sudden quiz on...cough cough...drugs? It's not you, is it...cough?"

"No, no, it's Bryant."

"Where is he now?"

"In the living room."

"And you?"

"In the bedroom."

Her questions left me more confused than ever, but I pressed on. "Just tell me what to do."

"Lock your bedroom door. Now."

"What?"



"Do it! Hurry!"

Her urgency made my legs move before my brain fully processed her instructions, and I found myself heading toward the door.

But just as I reached for the frame, the room darkened slightly, and I looked up Bryant's deep, bottomless eyes, red with desire.

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Gone was his usual composed demeanor. His upper body was clad in a black dress shirt, still managing to look somewhat reserved. Below, however, was a different story, with his arousal embarrassingly obvious.

Though we were intimately familiar with each other's bodies, I still blushed at the sight. It was too much.

On the other end of the line, Christine was still waiting for a response. "Jane...?"

Before I could reply, my phone died, plunging me into silence.

Panic set in. I stuttered, "I'll, uh, get you a glass of water..."

But as I tried to pass him, he wrapped his arms around me from behind, his lips finding the sensitive skin of my neck, sending shivers down my spine.

"Bryant..." My voice trembled as I spoke.

He seemed not to hear, pulling me closer, until I could feel the heat of his body through the thin gap between us.

His lips brushed my ear, breath moist and heavy with desire.

Here was the man I'd been pining over for years.

Despite my resolve to keep things strictly business, my body betrayed me, aching for his touch after being starved for so long...

But holding onto a bit of sense, I tried to push his arms off. "Bryant, I don't feel well..."

It sounded like a rejection, but my voice was soft, almost inviting.

me Bryant's breathing grew heavier, and with a sudden movement, he turned around to face him, his hands cradling my head as he kissed me deeply.

The night deepened around us, filled with the sounds of our heated encounter, blurring the lines between desire and reason.

In the heat of the moment, it was hard to tell who was burning more fiercely.

The scene was charged with an intensity that felt like we were newlyweds, lost in the throes of passion.

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But we were on the fast track to divorce.

I tried to push him away, but I just didn't have the strength. Panic rising, I was on the verge of tears "N Bryant, please, no!"

"Don't cry... You don't want this?" His voice was rough, his eyes a deep crimson, restraint palpable in his gaze.

"No..."

"Alright."

He closed his eyes for a moment, veins throbbing on his forehead, breathing heavy as if he was fighting with every ounce of his being, but eventually, he let me go...

Clutching my hands together, I whispered, "So, you'll..."

"Jane."

Suddenly, he opened his eyes, desire unabated if anything, more intense. He pulled me into his arms, his lips brushing my ear, "Help me out, will you?"

Maybe it was the confusion clouding my mind, but I detected a plea in his voice.

My heart skipped a beat, "How can I help?"

That question, in his mind, was consent. He leaned down, his arms scooping beneath my knees, lifting me off the ground.

Instinctively, my arms wrapped around his neck, a position that screamed vulnerability. He took two steps towards the living room couch and sat down, my legs still wrapped around his waist.

Trying to escape the heat between us, I shifted back.

His desire-filled gaze swept down, his voice husky, "You've made my pants wet."

Confused, I followed his gaze, noticing a damp patch on his black dress pants....

Embarrassment flooded me, but seeing the pleasure in his eyes sparked my irritation. "How exactly can I help you?" I asked.

Bryant leaned back, his warm, dry hands gently gripping my wrists, slowly caressing.

The next second, I heard the crisp sound of a belt buckle....

I shivered, his hand guiding mine to his dick.

"Just like this," he murmured, voice dark and husky.

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I stared at him, face aflame with shock.

Three years married, and sure, we've been intimate. But this was a first.

The thing under my hand felt like it could burn me alive, I wanted to let go but couldn't.

I stuttered, "What... what if I don't help?"

He looked down at me, "Don't know."

Just as I was about to suggest dropping the whole thing, he added, "Kevin said it might kill

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The next morning, I was rudely awakened by the cold, seeking the warmth next to me instinctively.

Just as I was about to drift back to sleep, reality hit me!

When I opened my eyes, I found Bryant's gaze filled with tenderness.

This was not like the superficial affection we shared during our three years of sleeping in the same bed; this was different.

But even now, I couldn't bring myself to believe it.

After all, I knew all too well how good this man was at pretending.

Bryant's voice was soft, "Slept well?"

"Yeah."

I responded, trying to distance myself, but the soreness in my arms made me gasp.

I didn't even realize how long I had been at it.

At first, I was clumsy, just going back and forth And then...

Images too explicit for words flooded my mind, and I avoided his gaze asking, "Why are you in my bed?"

After it was all over last night, I was too exhausted and fell asleep during his attempt to clean up.

He looked serious as he replied, "After you fell asleep, you pulled me in, wouldn't let me go."

I wanted to argue, but had no defense, so I stayed silent and m headed straight to the bathroom to freshen up.

Bryant followed, leaning against the bathroom door frame, "Are you busy this morning?"

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Confused, I asked, "What's up?"

Taking his time putting on his watch, Bryant said, "I'll take you to the m hospitaNopa full check-up."

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I had almost forgotten about it, honestly.

But he, surprisingly, hadn't.

Drying my face with a soft towel, I said, "No need, I'm fine."

He frowned, "Weren't you feeling unwell last night?"

How could I possibly tell him that the doctor had advised against intimacy during the first trimester of pregnancy?

So, I deflected, "I'm better now."

He was skeptical, "Really?"

If we were to go, it would be to the exclusive clinic under the Ferguson Group, where we'd use a private entrance.

No waiting in lines, and the test results would come back quickly.

But that would make it even harder for me to hide the pregnancy.

I couldn't go, no matter what.

Avoiding his gaze, I said, "I just don't want to go. I hate hospitals."

"Jane." Bryant's eyes narrowed slightly, "You're not hiding something from me, are you?"

My nervousness made me drop the moisturizer I was holding onto the marble countertop with a sharp clink, nearly stopping my heart.

It was too obvious I was hiding something.

He stepped closer, turning me to face him with a look that seemed to pierce right through me, "Is there really something you're not telling me?"

"Bryant..."

He hesitated, then said, "Are you... sick?"

I let out a long sigh, "Yes, so let's just get a divorce and not hold each other back."

"Impossible!" He raised his voice suddenly, a tremble in it hard to detect, and grabbed my hand to lead me outside.

"Bryant, what are you doing?"

"We're going to the hospital."

He gripped my wrist so tightly it hurt.

But I couldn't find it in me to be angry, "Are you afraid I'm going to die or somethin

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As soon as I said it, he spun around, his expression stern and teeth gritted, "If you dare to die, I'll nab your ashes and stash them in my family's tomb."""

His fierce demeanor took me aback, and I couldn't help but scoff. "Psycho."

It was almost as if he cared deeply. If I didn't know any better, I'd think he had fallen for

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Bryant's face darkened, but he didn't let go of my hand, "We're going to the hospital."

Refusing any further could lead him to directly check my medical records.

Either way, I'd be facing the same outcome.

Gritting my teeth, I said, albeit with a shaky voice, "Fine, let's go."

"Are you nervous?"

"No."

It wasn't nervousness; it was fear. But I had no choice in the matter.

On the way to the hospital, I was distracted, worrying about what would happen if he found out about the pregnancy.

Would we still be able to get a smooth divorce after Timothy's 80th birthday?

Or... Would he allow me to have the baby, potentially causing issues in his and Margaret's future life together?

The thought made me shiver.

Glancing at Bryant driving, his profile stern and tense, I felt even more uneasy.

It was supposed to be a routine check-up, but at the hospital, we were greeted personally by the head doctor.

"I don't need a CT scan." When setting up the check-up, I spoke up.

Bryant asked, "Why?"

"I just had one during the company's health screening. Why expose myself to more radiation for no reason?"

After I finished, worried he might suspect something, Bryant glanced e at the head doctor.

"Can other tests detect if there's something wrong with her?"

"The other tests should be sufficient, Mr. Ferguson," the head doctor replied.

"Alright then."

Bryant seemed slightly relieved.

I quickly added, "And the ultrasound... I had that done recently too..."

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His s drilled into mine, a deep concern veiling them, "Can't it be for any other reason?"

"Like what?" I couldn't deny I was fishing for something more.

His lips barely moved as he spoke, "I just want you to be well."

"... Sounds like something you'd say at a family Thanksgiving dinner."

A thought flickered through my mind, and before I knew it, a smile crept up, "Save it for Timothy's birthday bash next month."

Wishing me health. Wishing himself a lifetime of happiness with Margaret?

When the nurse came to draw my blood, I instinctively pulled back as she disinfected my arm, my body tensing up.

I was scared. I'd always been scared.

As a kid, it was always Dad who held me, with Mom gripping my other hand, coaxing me through every needle and every blood draw.

And there were always rewards.

But over these past years, my health had been decent. A common cold here, some over-the-counter meds there - hardly ever needing blood drawn.

So, my fear never really faded. But fear or not, was grown up now, without my parents around.

"Don't be afraid."

Suddenly, Bryant's warm hand enveloped mine his thumb gently caressing the back of my hand as he soothingly whispering, "I'm here with you."

"You being here doesn't make it hurt any less."

"Then squeeze my hand if it hurts. I'll bear the pain with you." His voice was velvety smooth I looked down to see the man who always seemed to tower over me, now half-kneeling by my side, filling my heart and yet, stirring a pang of sadness. I murmured, "But you can't stay with me forever."

My voice was too low, he didn't catch it. "What did you say?"

"Nothing." I shook my head.

Some thoughts are better kept inside than voiced.

After the blood draw, I was off to the ultrasound room the head doctor had arranged.

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Bryant waited outside.



As the doctor applied the gel, then handed me tissue to wipe it off after he was done, my heart raced.

I knew Bryant would find out about the pregnancy sooner or later, but I didn't expect it this soon.

Maybe the head doctor had told her who I was as the examining doctor smiled at me, "Mrs. Ferguson, you're pregnant, aren't you aware?"

"I... know."

I pressed my lips together, "How's the baby developing?"

"The baby's doing great, nine weeks now. Look, you can already see tiny hands and feet."

"Really..."

Tears rolled down uncontrollably as I stared at the screen showing the little life inside me. Happy, thrilled, yet so heartbroken.

"Mrs. Ferguson, are you alright? This is great news, why the tears?"

"Because," I cleaned my tears, replying. "I'm about to get a divorce. I can't give it a complete family."

With a sliver of hope, I pleaded, "Doctor, can you not mention the pregnancy on the report?"

"You don't want Mr. Ferguson to know? Mrs. Ferguson, he'd be thrilled to know about the baby. Maybe it could change his mind? You're young; and you might not realize how important a complete family is for a child. In your situation, instead of divorcing, why not try to save your marriage?"

The doctor, nearing fifty, must have been one of the hospital's top consultants, speaking with such gravity and concern.

I forced a bitter smile, saying, "Even if his heart isn't with me?"

"Ah, once you become a mother, you can't just think about about it, what child yourself. Think child doesn't yearn for a father?"

Her words left a bitter taste in my mouth.

Seeing my silence, she sighed, "I'm sorry, I can't help you there. I have to document everything accurately in the reports."

As I got off the examination table, with the ultrasound report now in my hands, every step towards the door felt heavier than the last.

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