

## GOSSIP EX-WIFE

### Chapter 17 Living Together Forever

"Honey, this is so kind of you!"

Jessie was elated, thinking that she had finally defeated Sherry. She jumped up and wrapped her arms around Jeremy. Now, at last, nothing could get in the way of their happiness. She put one hand on the back of Jeremy's neck and with her other hand tried to unbutton his shirt, wanting to embrace him skin to skin.

"Be quiet," he snapped.

His face had gone cold. He suddenly felt as though her touch burned him. He unwrapped her arms and pushed her aside, then turned and entered the bedroom. He slammed the door shut so hard that the picture frame on the wall rattled.

Jessie stood silently, her mouth open with shock. She thought about knocking on the door and trying to calm him down, but she didn't dare. She felt tears threatening to stream down her cheeks.

She enjoyed being with Jeremy because he was so wealthy, generous, and handsome. But he had such a bad temper! He would buy her the nicest things, but she never knew when his anger would flare up. She worried that if she said the wrong thing, he would throw her out.

Quietly, Jessie backed away from the closed door, deciding not to disturb him for now.

She went to the living room and sat on the sofa. After a while, she began to get bored, so she got up and began exploring the enormous villa. She thought smugly to herself that this villa could very well become her home soon.

However, even a cursory exploration of the first floor made her restless and uneasy.

The living room was strewn with items of women's clothing, such as shoes, earrings, and hats. There were pastel-colored toothbrushes and towels in the bathroom, as well as pots and plates in the kitchen that bore floral, feminine designs.

All of these painted the clear impression of a woman who had lived here and left her mark on the household.

She remembered how many times she had tried to persuade Jeremy to take her to his house. Now she knew why he always refused.

She knew she was not his only lover, but she had not expected this. He actually lived full-time with another woman!

Her cheeks flushed, and tears pooled in her eyes again. She realized that Jeremy never stayed the night at her house because he had someone else to come home to, someone else to keep him company. She felt a wave of hatred for him and gritted her teeth.

She forced herself to keep looking around.

She went through all the drawers in the living room, one by one. Then she moved on to the TV cabinet. She opened the door and peered inside, and then saw the vase placed on top of the cabinet.

Jessie examined the vase. It was made of white porcelain, and had an unusual, flowing shape. It was obviously handmade. Several verses had been inscribed on the surface of the vase.

It only took her a second to realize that it was a love poem.

She felt furious. She lifted the vase from its perch and examined it carefully. There were three words on the bottom of the white porcelain vase: "Happy birthday, honey."

"Bitch," Jessie muttered to herself. Anger was building up inside her at Jeremy and at this woman. How dare she call him honey?

Had they been in love with each other?

She bit her lower lip. Thinking about Jeremy in love with some other woman, she felt her body trembling with emotion.

"What are you doing?" said a voice behind her. She had not heard Jeremy leave the room. She was so

startled by his sudden appearance that she lost her grip on the vase. It broke as soon as it hit the floor, shattering into several pieces.

"I'm sorry!" she said automatically. "Honey, it was an accident..."

The look of rage on Jeremy's face scared Jessie, and she trailed off, shrinking from him in fear.

"Get out of here!" he yelled. He reached out, grabbed her by the arm, and began pulling her none too gently towards the door.

The vase was a birthday present, given to him by Sherry.

He had never indicated that he found it valuable, but he kept it in that spot for several years. He couldn't believe Jessie had been reckless enough to mess

with his personal belongings, and to break an irreplaceable item.

He pushed Jessie outside and closed the door behind her, ignoring her crying face. He heard her pound on the door and collapse to the ground, but he walked away.

Jeremy returned to the living room, staring at the shards of the broken vase. He felt dazed.

He still remembered the shy way that Sherry had presented the vase to him. She had covered the poem on the vase with her hands so he couldn't read it immediately, blushing because she was worried he wouldn't like it.

He bent down and picked up one of the white porcelain shards. He couldn't shake the superstitious feeling that the broken vase symbolized the broken,

irreparable state of their own relationship.

It was nearly midnight of the next day by the time Sherry finally returned to the villa.

Jeremy was seated in the living room, where he had spent almost the entirety of the past thirty hours, leaving only to get food or to go to the bathroom. He refused to admit to himself that he had been waiting for her to arrive.

She was wearing a tailored white coat and high heels that did marvelous things for her hourglass figure.

Holding a cake in her hand, when she saw him sitting on the sofa in a mess with his black hair, she was a little stunned and said, "It is your birthday today."

She spoke in such a detached voice that she might as well have said, "Hi. Good weather today."



His unwilling pleasure at her appearance was replaced by disappointment.

Every year, she had always made an effort to prepare a surprise, and she was always the first to greet him, but now...

"I'll make you a bowl of noodles," she offered, putting down the cake on a nearby table. She hesitated, giving him a strange look, then went to the kitchen.

As soon as her back was turned, he stared at her unabashedly. He couldn't take his eyes off of her.

She removed her coat and folded it neatly, placing it over the back of a chair. Her waist was so slender, and she had such perfect curves, her cleavage shown off by the low-cut top. The way her clothes clung to her sexy body, and the way she moved around the

kitchen in those heels, with those long legs, were extremely tempting.

She was busy in the kitchen preparing food for him, and he felt a surge of satisfaction.

An unexpected thought suddenly crystallized in his brain. He thought to himself, what if they lived together forever? What if things could always be this way?

His usual reaction to the idea of being tied down to any woman was aversion and contempt. But this time, neither of those feelings surfaced in him. He was surprised at how pleasant he found the prospect of continuing to live with Sherry. He snapped out of the fog of jumbled thoughts when he heard the sound of Sherry chopping something in the kitchen.

She was focused on the movement of the knife over

the vegetables, her hands moving gracefully and expertly. The fluorescent light above her head shone down over her bent head, creating a faint halo on her shining hair.

Her face was so serene, while his thoughts were in such turmoil, that Jeremy felt as though everything had been turned upside down.

Moreover, something else was upsetting him. He couldn't figure out what it was until she came to him with a bowl of delicious long-life noodles that she set down carefully on the coffee table in front of the sofa.

For his birthday, this was it. This was all she had prepared: a single bowl of noodles and that box of store-bought cake.

The difference between the effort she had made today and in previous years was very stark. He felt a

pang of something like jealousy in his heart. He couldn't believe it—he was jealous of his own past self.

Holding a coke in her hand, when she saw him sitting on the sofa in a mess with his black hair, she was a little stunned and said, "It is your birthday today."

She spoke in such a detached voice that she might as well have said, "Hi. Good weather today."

His unwilling pleasure at her appearance was replaced by disappointment.

Every year, she had always made an effort to prepare a surprise, and she was always the first to greet him, but now...

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