

Love Burned She Rose Unscathed Novel

Love Burned Chapter 81 - 90

Chapter 81

Corley paused, his thoughts swirling. "So, let me see if I've got this straight," he began, "Biology is the big picture, right? Applied life sciences are all about getting your hands dirty in the lab, while bioinformatics is more about crunching numbers, using math, computer science, and statistics to tackle biological questions?"

Roseanne looked at him, her gaze taking on a new level of seriousness.⁸

"You've got it exactly right," she confirmed ⁸

'Really?' Corley's face brightened into a grin, his eyes twinkling with satisfaction. "Well, all credit to you. You explained it perfectly. I'm just summarizing, breaking it down into simpler terms?"

Roseanne reassessed the man before her. In her mind, Corley was the quintessential social butterfly, always seen at restaurants, bars, or clubs, the epitome of a party-goer. Yet, there he was, displaying a solid understanding of her field.

It was a reminder that appearances could be deceiving.

She thought about her six-year relationship with Murray, who barely knew what her major was in college, let alone engage in a conversation about it. They spent most of their time hanging out with his friends at bars and having sex on the big bed in his fancy house B

So, hearing Corley effortlessly use the jargon of her profession was a surprise.

Sitting beside them, Cliff was out of his depth, his confusion clear as day. The barrage of unfamiliar terms seemed to give him a headache.

Finally, after dinner, Cliff was the first to stand up, eagerly taking care of the bill.

Corley watched him leave, a sly smile playing on his lips. Turning back to Roseanne, he noticed the sparkle in her eyes growing more intense.

As they continued their conversation, he glanced at his phone. "Cliff says he's caught up with something and asked me to ensure you get home safe. "3

Roseanne glanced at her watch, realizing how late it was. "That's okay. I can just call a cab."

Corley insisted, "As a gentleman, I couldn't possibly let a lady head home alone after dinner. Besides, I'm just fulfilling a request." Roseanne bit her lip, hesitating. "Well, thank you,"

"My pleasure."

They left the restaurant, and Corley took her coat, gallantly opening the passenger side door for her. "After you."

The gesture was indeed that of a gentleman.

Roseanne smiled faintly. "Thank you."

During the twenty-minute drive, they hardly spoke, enveloped by the silence in the car.

Corley drove smoothly, allowing Roseanne to become captivated by the passing scenery, the retreating streets, snow-dusted trees, and bare branches, all under a cold, biting wind.

Occasionally, Corley's gaze would drift to the woman beside him. She was sweet, serene. Sitting there, she seemed to exude a delicate, fragrant air of sophistication. Her refined nose, delicate lips, and long eyelashes gave her a look of innocence and charm when lost in thought.

Previously, she had sported elaborate curls that, while beautiful, didn't quite suit her. They were lovely but lacked uniqueness. With her straight hair casually tucked under a scarf, she looked effortlessly stunning.

A fleeting smile crossed Corley's face, but it was gone instantly. He kept his hands on the wheel, eyes fixed on the road ahead, seemingly without distractions.

Chapter 82

Cruising down Orchid Street, Corley and Roseanne saw a breathtaking sight. Thousands of drones were hanging mid-air, shifting and morphing into various shapes with impeccable coordination. It was a drone show, a spectacle that commanded a starting price in the millions despite lasting barely fifteen minutes.

The area around the venue was bustling, and luckily, the spot Corley and Roseanne stumbled upon offered a prime view. Corley pulled over, and they watched in fascination as the drones danced through the windshield, forming intricate three-dimensional models.⁸

Following Corley's gaze, Roseanne was instantly mesmerized by the luminous display.

Corley teased, "Guess how many drones are up

up there?"

"Is that even guessable?" Roseanne chuckled.

"Sure is." "2

I've got no clue."

"I'd say..." He paused dramatically, "1437

"Why 1437%

"Well, isn't the whole idea of proposing to love someone?"

The next moment, the drones rearranged themselves in the night sky to spell "Marry me."

"How did you know it was a proposal?" Roseanne was astonished.!!

Corley pointed toward the viewing deck where a man dressed sharply in a suit held a bouquet of roses hidden behind his back. "Impressive," Roseanne couldn't help but admire.

She had pegged Corley as just another privileged, carefree heir before. Today, she saw his professional, meticulous, and observant side. Their earlier conversation over dinner had touched on her field of study, and Corley had casually mentioned the stock fluctuations of NexTech Innovations. In just a few sentences, Roseanne realized his financial acumen was intimidating.

But then again, thinking about Murray and his circle of friends, including Corley, none were slackers when it came to making money. The world of these golden boys was far more complex than she had imagined. Thus, gracefully stepping back was her best exit strategy.

"We're at my place now. Thanks for the ride," Roseanne said as Corley's car could only stop at the lane entrance.

Aware that their relationship hadn't progressed to the point where he would escort her to her doorstep, Corley didn't stick around. He watched her walk away before he drove off,

Not long after, Cliff called. "Where'd you guys vanish to? I turn around, only to find you're gone."

Cliff had finished paying the bill when he ran into his ex-girlfriend from nearly a year ago. She clung to him like glue, dragging him into dinner plans and flirtatious teases, taking him quite an effort to shake off.

"Oh, Roseanne had something come up and needed to leave urgently. I dropped her off, Corley explained casually.

ff had b

"And Murray? Weren't we supposed to bring him along, make it look like a chance encounter?" Cliff Corley replied indifferently, "I couldn't find him. Probably, he's with his new girlfriend.

been holding back this question.

Since Murray's meetings with his girlfriend were neither frequent nor sparse, Cliff didn't suspect a thing.!!

"Such a missed opportunity," Cliff sighed.

Ending the call, Corley parked by the roadside and transferred money to an unfamiliar account!

The recipient called soon after, "Trust Mr. Sullivan to be so straightforward. Looking forward to working together again.

If Cliff had been there, his jaw would have hit the floor

On the o

other end was none other than his clingy ex-girlfriendi

Corley responded coldly. "Sure thing."

"But I'm curious," she continued. "Why go through all this trouble to have me stick to Cliff to buy you ten minutes? Was it necessary?"! Corley's actions were a testament to the lengths he'd go, not just for success but perhaps for something or someone more personal.

Chapter 83

"What can you do in ten minutes?" The girl asked.

Corley's face was expressionless as he said, "Ever heard how curiosity killed the cat?"

"Sorry."

"Once the money's in your pocket, keep your mouth shut" Corley threatened.

After getting home and showering. Roseanne planned to review a few papers before hitting the sack

Just as she sat down, she received a message from Corley.

You left your gloves in my car¹⁸

He attached a photo of the gloves. They were indeed the ones Roseanne wore that day.

It then dawned on Roseanne that she had taken them off after getting into the car because the heating was high. Corley had kindly taken them from her and set them aside.

She had forgotten them when she left.!

[Can I drop by to pick them up sometime?]

Corley replied: [My house has a strict no-delivery policy

y. Since you're

[How about this? Let's grab a coffee sometime, and I return your gloves. I'm taking an MBA course at Kingswell University. I'm an alum, if it's not too much trouble, maybe you could show me around and help me get familiar with the campus.

Roseanne might not have agreed if Corley had only offered to return her gloves or invited her to a meal. Roseanne felt their acquaintance hadn't reached that level of familiarity yet. But with him asking for a favor, and considering she had forgotten her gloves, making it her oversight, she felt even more obligated. Given that Corley needed help with something she could easily offer. [Alright then]

Corley texted, [I'm free next Friday at 11 am. Does that work for you?]

Roseanne had no objections and sent an OK gesture in response.

On the day they had agreed, Corley parked his car and walked to the coffee shop.

The coffee shop was on a quaint street not far from Kingswell University.⁸

The owner had a knack for decoration that appealed to the younger crowd, making it popular even on a Friday.

He chose a seat by the window. Roseanne arrived a few minutes later, and a waitress came to them with the menus as they settled.

The vintage record player filled the place with a soothing, foreign song, exuding a bohemian charm. Corley ordered an iced Americano while Roseanne went for a latte.⁸

“Your gloves,” He had packed the gloves in a brown paper bag.

Roseanne reached out to take them. “Thanks.”

Corley looked around, the air rich with the aroma of coffee beans, the ambiance neither too cold nor too dry, utterly comfortable. “Do you come here often??”

Roseanne answered, “Sometimes.”¹

Across the street, visible through the floor-to-ceiling window, lay a river, completely frozen over in the dead of winter. Bare willow branches drooped over its edges, draped in a fluffy layer of snow from the previous night.

Sitting on a bench by the river on a bad day could be soothing.

Corley observed her expression, a slight smile on his lips. “Nice spot, even nicer music.”

Roseanne stirred her coffee and listened as he said, “Miles Davis’s jazz started in the ‘90s. Now it’s a rarity to find someone who knows this classic tune.”

Roseanne looked curious. “You seem to know a lot?”

Jack of all trades, master of none; he joked with a shrug.

Then, Roseanne remembered Cliff mentioning that Corley’s mother was a renowned musician. However, Roseanne chose not to pry further and stopped there.

As they finished their coffee, Corley stood up. “Let’s go!!!”

Chapter 84

Roseanne grabbed her bag, and they set off for Kingswell University together.”

As they strolled and chatted, Roseanne found Corley was indeed knowledgeable. He could keep up with any topic she brought up. His voice was steady, his demeanor gentle and refined, making his company pleasant.

After wandering for a while, they passed by an old stone wall, and glancing sideways, Roseanne spotted a familiar figure.

Owen had just finished a lecture and was on his way to the lab when he looked up to meet Roseanne's smiling eyes. He paused, then noticed Corley standing beside her.

"Fancy seeing you here. Just finished with class?" Roseanne broke the silence.

Owen nodded. "Heading to the lab, and you?"

"Just showing my friend around campus. Here's my friend, Corley Sullivan, she introduced, turning to Corley, "This is Owen Reynolds."

Their eyes met, and Corley extended his hand with a slight lift of his lips, "Mr. Reynolds, I've heard much about you.

"It's a pleasure," Owen responded.

The Reynolds and the Sullivan families were well-known in Lumina, circulating in the same social circles, though it was their first meeting.

A subtle tension hung between them, unnoticed by Roseanne, who wondered if their handshake lasted too long.

Owen was the first to let go. "I should head to the lab."

Roseanne watched him leave, and Corley asked with a thoughtful look, "Are you close with him?"

Roseanne chose not to go into details, simply responding, "We're acquainted."

Corley didn't press further.

That evening, Roseanne received a message from Corley.

[Thanks for showing me around campus today.

She replied: [it was nothing. No need for thanks.]

Turning off her phone, she tossed it beside her bed and lay down. Freshly aired, the pillow carried a faint scent of soap, warm and comforting, lulling her into sleep.⁸

Without the need for intense studying, Roseanne allowed herself a rare lie-in, waking up at eight to get ready.

The neighborhood was old but lively. As Roseanne stepped outside, neighbors with grocery baskets and dog walkers greeted her with smiles. Roseanne responded cheerfully to each

Exiting the alley, she walked to the nearby old street, where a diner at the corner served milkshakes that were neither too sweet nor too thick and crispy peach pies.

Entering, she spotted Owen sitting with his back to her. She smirked, tapped him on the back playfully, and quickly sat opposite him. Seeing his unchanging expression, Roseanne was puzzled. "Aren't you at all surprised?"

"Ms. Cole, this is the second time." Owen said, eating his peach pie, "Last week was the same. And your stealth isn't much faster than old Buster tied at the door."

Glancing at the large yellow dog by the entrance, Roseanne was speechless.

Before she could retort, the old lady running the diner came over with a smile. "Ah, dearie, you're back. The usual?"

Roseanne nodded. "One peach pie and a sandwich, please."

Though aged, the old lady moved briskly, bringing the peach pie, sandwich, and Roseanne's favorite drink.

Seeing that, Roseanne beamed. "Thank you, ma'am.")

The old lady's eyes crinkled into a smile. "Enjoy your breakfast."

The peach pie was crispy with the fresh peach and cream cheese inside. A sprinkle of nutmeg and honey added a burst of fragrance.. Roseanne glanced at Owen, who always stuck to the same simple meal. "Maybe you should try something new next time?"

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Before Owen could utter a word, Roseanne glanced over the table, found a clean plate, and picked up a small piece of her peach pie with her fork, placing them before him. "Try this?"

Owen hesitated before picking it up and slowly chewing it in his mouth.

Roseanne blinked. "Well? How is it?"

It tastes good."1

Seeing her hopeful look, Owen nodded. "It

Roseanne beamed. "See? My recommendations never disappoint."R

Owen couldn't help but laugh along.8

Cliff interrupted, "Hey, Corley, your birthday's coming, huh? What's the plan this year? Go-kart racing, a drag queen show, or go big with a wild striptease party?"

York immediately approved, "Love that idea."

Their inquisitive gazes turned to the man of the hour Corley. When it came to having fun, he was the most inventive of the trio. Some might look all prim and proper in a suit and tie, but they were wilder than anyone.

"Let's keep it simple with a birthday bash this year."

Cliff was puzzled. York was even more bewildered.

Corley asked, "What? Is there a problem?"8

"It's just this doesn't sound like you, Corley Cliff eyed him up and down. "Are you feeling okay today?"

York couldn't resist a smirk. "A birthday bash? What are you, tuming into my grandpa?

In this day and age, who would still do birthday bashes?!

"Wait a minute." Cliff's eyes lit up. "Is it the naughty kind?"

York sat up straight, eyes sparkling with anticipation.

Corley replied, "What are you thinking? The regular kind. I've booked a private mansion on Sunset Boulevard. Invitations will be out in a few days." With that, he stood up and left

Cliff and York exchanged glances, both looking confused. They wondered what was wrong with Corley.

Roseanne was

"Yes. B

was somewhat surprised to receive a call from Corley and even more so when he invited her to his birthday party. "Me?"

Roseanne frowned. Corley's parties always drew people like Murray, and she really wasn't eager to run into him.!

“No outsiders, just friends hanging out. Cliff will be there, too, Won’t you come?” Corley noticed her hesitation and raised an eyebrow. “Or are you afraid of something?”

Roseanne held the phone, silent

“You and Murray are over, and he seems happy with his new girlfriend. Are you afraid because you’re not over him?”

Roseanne slightly frowned. “Of course not. We’ve made things clear and cut ties.”

Corley smiled. “In that case, there’s nothing to worry about. I’ll send you the address. Don’t forget to come.”

With that, he hung up without waiting for her response.!

On the day of the party, the mansion was bustling with excitement

Murray arrived fashionably late with Millie. After shedding their coats, Millie handed them to a waiter and linked arms with him as they stepped through the main entrance.

Properties on Sunset Boulevard were worth their weight in gold, and Corley’s sprawling estate was only available through family connections. The estate’s design and decoration were renowned artists’ works, with a diviner brought in for good measure.!

Passing through a rockery and the backyard, they finally reached the guest area. Upon entering, Murray greeted Corley first.

“Happy Birthday,” he said, tossing a set of keys to him. It was for the yacht Corley had mentioned wanting. Knowing his love for the sea. Murray had bought one as a gift.

Corley thanked him “Much appreciated.”

Murray was about to add more when his gaze shifted, suddenly catching sight of a familiar figure.

Chapter 86

He froze suddenly, almost reflexively yanking his hand away from Millie’s gentle grasp.

Caught off guard, Millie couldn’t help but frown, following his gaze, only to find Roseanne standing not too far ahead.

Murray furrowed his brows, turning to Corley. “You invited Roseanne?”

“Yeah, we’re all friends here,” Corley smiled innocuously.

Murray pressed, “Why didn’t you give me a heads–up?”

Corley shrugged. "Got caught up, I guess. But I didn't think it'd be a big deal."

Meanwhile, Roseanne had spotted Murray, too, but quickly averted her gaze. She was there to drop off her well-wishes and leave. Her time was too precious, buried in books and research, to waste on social gatherings.

Approaching Corley, she said, "Happy birthday. Here's the present for you. It isn't expensive. Hope you like it." She handed him a gift box. Corley accepted it with a chuckle. "Well, thanks a bunch,"

As the birthday boy, the center of attention, he'd mingled and had a slight buzz.³

"Let's celebrate with a drink, shall we?" A waiter passed by with a tray of wine, from which he took a glass, "Cheers to me.?"

He knocked back his drink in one gulp, prompting Roseanne to do the same. After she finished her drink, she checked the time and hinted that she should get going.

Corley raised an eyebrow. "Leaving so soon? The party's just getting started."

Seeing her hesitation, he quickly added, "How about you stay till we cut the cake?" "Okay," she agreed.

The wine hit her more than expected, and the room felt warm. Corley got caught up directions and headed toward the garden through an arched doorway.

up with other

other guests, so Roseanne asked a waiter for

Murray watched Roseanne leave, his face darkening. She hadn't given him a moment's attention, and she was going without a glance his way.

He was about to follow when Millie suddenly clung to his arm. "Babe, I'm feeling under the weather. Can we find somewhere to sit down, please?" Her voice was soft and weak, leaning into him like a delicate flower.

At that moment, Roseanne had disappeared.

Murray had no choice but to step back, his voice tinged with irritation, "Let's go."

The path from the living room to the garden wasn't far, lined with lush greenery and exotic flowers that one might only see in high-end magazines. Some of these rare species, difficult to maintain and worth a fortune, filled the garden, their scent mingling with the crisp air, easing Roseanne's melancholy slightly.

Roseanne decided to take a walk. Suddenly, a warm breath caressed her neck, a man's boozy exhalations enveloping her. Thinking it was Murray, she was about to pull away when a low chuckle stopped her cold.

Roseanne was stunned to find it was Corley! His hand rested on her waist, his unfamiliar warmth causing her to shiver with repulsion. Without thinking, she pulled away, stepping back.

"You're drunk. I'm not your date," she stated plainly.

Corley looked at her, her eyes wide and startled, like a bird about to take flight in panic.

Chapter 87

He chuckled softly, disbelief painting his features. "I'm not mistaken." Roseanne seemed lost, her eyes briefly clouded with confusion.

Then Corley spoke again, "I want to kiss you."

Roseanne was dumbfounded, speechless for a long moment. Her mind was a whirlwind of thoughts, and for a second, she couldn't tell if this scene unfolding before her was reality or a dream because it was absurd!!!

Corley's smile had a roguish charm, his handsome face carrying a hint of recklessness and indifference, mixed with the slight buzz from the alcohol on his breath, giving off a vibe of defiance. 'Surprised, huh?

Surprised was an understatement. Roseanne felt her brain had short-circuited.

"You... you..." She tried to speak, but no coherent words came out.!!

"Yes, I have a thing for you."

"What are you talking about? How could anything happen between us?"

"Why do

give it a try and see?"

"But you and Murray..." Weren't the two of them like brothers??

Corley continued, "You and Murray have broken up. I like you, and I'm boldly going after what I want. What's wrong with that?"

Only then did Roseanne take a good look at the man before her. She had to admit Corley was tall, handsome and carried an air of gentle nobility. If Murray was like the

unpredictable weather, never knowing when it would rain or shine, Corley was like the wind slipping through your fingers, formless, seemingly within reach, yet hard to grasp.

“I’m sorry, Roseanne said, “I don’t like you.”

Corley didn’t seem upset. Instead, he even smiled as if he had expected her response. “Yeah, I know.”

Just as Roseanne thought she could breathe a sigh of relief, he spoke again. “That’s why I’m pursuing you, not just confessing and expecting you to be with me.”}

Roseanne didn’t know what to say in response.

“Why not take a chance on me? Some people don’t recognize a good thing when they see it, but I do.” Corley stepped closer, “I’ve seen your kindness, attention to detail, and talent, and I understand your pride, your determination...”

“Don’t come any closer!” Watching his overwhelming frame approach, Roseanne stepped back instinctively. “No matter what you say, I won’t fall for you. This so-called pursuit is a waste of time and unnecessary.”

Roseanne had never considered the possibility of anything happening with anyone close to Murray, especially not his best friend. “To me, you’re Murray’s friend. I’ll pretend I never heard anything you said today, and from now on, please don’t bring this up again.”

Corley frowned, seemingly not expecting such a direct rejection. He reached out to embrace Roseanne. But a force yanked him away the next second, followed by a fist swinging at him.!!

With eyes burning with fury, Murray punched Corley’s nose and, not satisfied, threw another.

Uneasy, he had come out, looking for Roseanne to talk, but what did he see? His best friend was hitting on his ex-girlfriend. Roseanne had her back to him, unaware of her expression, but Corley’s face, filled with infatuation and lust, was evident enough to suggest something scandalous!

Murray’s mind went blank for five seconds. When he snapped back to reality, he had clenched his fists. “Wow! Corley, you are indeed a great buddy! Didn’t you know Roseanne was my girl? What were you two doing?”

Chapter 88

“Seriously, Roseanne?” Murray turned his gaze to her, his voice dripping with disdain. “Out of everyone you could flirt with, you chose him? Are you happy now?”

Roseanne felt a rush of anger and injustice. She was the one who got dragged into this mess without reason. What did she do to deserve that?

Facing Murray's accusation, Corley's calmness was almost eerie. He touched the bruise on his nose, a cold smile playing on his lips. "What do you think we were doing? You saw everything, didn't you?"

Murray's face was devoid of emotion. "So, you've got nothing to explain?"

"What's there to explain? That I like Roseanne? That I want to date her?" Corley shot back.

At those words, Roseanne's face turned pale.

Murray's eyes burned with rage as he clenched his fists, gearing up to go back at Corley.

"Damn it! Do you like her? Want to date her? What gives you the right?"

Taking a punch that turned his head, Corley quickly moved to shield Roseanne behind him. "What? Why can't I?"

The protective gesture fueled Murray's anger further. He spat out each word, "Of course you can't!"

Corley teased, "And who are you to say that? An ex-boyfriend who's already history?"

Murray retorted, "Whether it's over is up to me. Who do you think you are?"

Corley's face showed a hint of guilt. "Sorry, but you were the one who let go first.

"That doesn't mean you get to chase after her Corley, are you that desperate? Every man knows he can't date his best friend's girl! "Murray, calm down. Today, people break up and get back on all the time. If she's not with you, does it mean Roseanne can never be with anyone else? If not me, it would be someone else."

The thought of Roseanne living a happy life with another man blew Murray's mind off. His hands trembled uncontrollably, his mind a blank. When he regained his senses, his fists were already flying toward Corley.

Corley dodged quickly but couldn't avoid all the blows because he had to protect Roseanne.

Murray didn't get off scot-free, either. Corley knew him too well, having grown up together, and soon enough, Murray's lip split and his forehead bruised.

Millie had taken a moment in the break room to calm her nerves before heading to the lobby to look for Murray. She had decided that Roseanne was a thing of the past, and bumping into her like that was inevitable. There was no need for her to be petty. After realizing it, Millie felt her mood lightened. However, after searching the lobby with no sign of Murray, a waiter pointed her toward the garden outside. And what did she see?

Murray was in the middle of a brawl with none other than his close friend Corley! The intensity of their fight took Millie by surprise. She snapped back to reality upon seeing Murray's injuries and rushed forward. "Stop it! Both of you. Just stop! This mess will end badly

Millie reached to pull Murray away, but he shoved her aside, causing her to fall awkwardly to the ground

Chapter 89

Cliff and York heard the commotion and ran out.8

"Jesus, what's going on here?"

"Have you guys lost your minds?{"}

"Break it up, now! Murray! Corley!"

Each of them grabbed one of the fighters, with Cliff trying to soothe Murray. "Chill, Murray. Take a deep breath, man!"

York implored Corley, "What're you doing, Corley? Since when do we settle things with fists?"

Murray and Corley shouted, "Let go of me! Back off!"

But as both men seemed poised to dive back into the fray, Cliff and York knew they couldn't let go.!!

"Spill it. What's this all about?" York's eyes darted between the two.

"We're all buddies here. There's no need to ruin the vibe!" Cliff tried to smooth things over.

York reminded, "Murray, it's Corley's birthday. Whatever it is, it can wait till after today."

Corley wiped the blood from his lip, shooting Murray a look before smiling. "I meant every word I said, I've thought it through, and you have no say in this."

With that, he turned to Roseanne, who stood there, pale and shocked. He took off his jacket and draped it over her shoulders gently. "Are you alright? I didn't mean to scare you. Let me take you home."

that was the reason for

Cliff and York were shocked at the sight. What the hell was happening between Corley and Roseanne? So, th Murray's meltdown?

Roseanne finally snapped back to reality. As Corley reached for her, she subtly stepped back, removing the jacket and handing it back to him.

"No need. I'll get home by myself. And I don't want to be pulled into your mess again. I'm not a toy for you to fight over. And then, she looked up firmly "And let's not contact each other anymore."

too!

Her words were meant for Corley and Murray, standing not too far away, eyes red with anger.

"Anne... Corley started, looking down, "I'm sorry. I didn't think things through today. If I've caused you any trouble, Ill make it up to you..." Roseanne c cut him off, "If you want to make it up to me, stay away from me.

If she had been confused and upset before, she was calm. Roseanne knew it wasn't her fault!

Corley's impulsiveness and Murray's rage had nothing to do with her. She was an innocent bystander. So, she refused to carry the burden. of their guilt and embarrassment. She only wanted to rid herself of the trouble these two men had caused

But Corley wasn't about to let her go. He contrived meetings and planned encounters, all to spend time with her. And now that he'd finally made his move, he wasn't about to let her walk away from his chase. "Anne, you can reject me, but pursuing you is my right.

Roseanne was in disbelief. Did he really want to make things worse? Wasn't this mess already out of hand?

Predictably, Murray's already stormy expression darkened even more. "Corley, I'm still here. Think twice before you talk!*

Corley shrugged. "We've fought. We've argued. Time to face reality."

"I'm out of here," Roseanne said, turning to leave.

But Corley wasn't about to give her that chance, reaching out to catch her shoulder.

Chapter 90

However, his movement was halted by another hand the next second, catching his mid-swing, Corley frowned, eyeing the newcomer with annoyance, "You?"

Roseanne murmured, "Mr. Reynolds, how did you..."

Her voice almost broke at that moment.

her f

Owen's gaze settled on her face. "Are you okay?"

Roseanne nodded. "Yeah," but her voice was thick with congestion. That wasn't true.

Owen offered, "I've got

got my car here. Can I give you a lift home?"

Roseanne said gratefully. "That would be great, thank you."

Owen wrapped an arm around her, ready to leave.

To Roseanne, she felt like a pebble teetering on the edge of a cliff, unstable until Owen showed up, grounding her. "Mr. Reynolds, what brings you here?"²

Next to the estate was a luxury hotel where he attended a conference. Taking a break, he stepped out for some fresh air and stumbled upon the scene."

Owen answered lightly, "Just here for something."⁸

"Wait!" Corley caught up, "Owen, you've lost your way. The conference is next door. It is my private estate here."

Owen stopped in his tracks, Roseanne halting alongside him.

Corley said, "I can take care of my guest. No need for Mr. Reynolds to trouble himself.")

Owen turned, his gaze briefly sweeping over him, "Did you ask the guest what she wants?"[?]

Roseanne quickly spoke, "I'll go with Mr. Reynolds."[%]

Corley was at a loss for words. "Anne..."

Owen said, "Let's go."

"Hold it Mur

Murray couldn't hold back anymore, seeing Roseanne tangled up with the two men. "Roseanne, where do you want Roseanne answered quietly, "Home"

"Hah... To this man's home, right? Murray pointed at Owen, a sneer creeping onto his lips. "Are you that desperate? Can't live without a man?"²

"Were you already messing around behind my back before we broke up? Roseanne, you're something else!"

"I leave, and you just move on like that? Even going after someone I know, you're truly disgusting!"

In a rage, Murray lost all reason, wanting to shame Roseanne, whom he viewed as fickle and ungrateful in the most extreme way possible.

Then, he turned to Corley and Owen. "My ex is so appealing to you, huh? Fighting over her? Does she deserve it?"

Roseanne couldn't stop shaking, Murray's words cutting through her like knives, blood gushing out with every slice. When the pain reached its peak, it turned into numbness.

Her eyes, reddened, fixed on Murray's distorted face, her teeth chattering from the cold as if she got submerged in ice water. At that moment, she felt utterly senseless

Owen frowned deeply, Roseanne's frail figure trembling in the cold wind as if a mere touch would send her tumbling down.

"I thought what we had was real after six years. But n now, I realize how little I meant to you."

Her voice was low, choked with sobs, a mocking smile on her lips. "It turns out I've been wrong from the start, leading to a cascade of mistakes with no way back..."

Seeing her pale face, red eyes, and the tears streaming down, Murray felt he had been struck on the head, a tightness in his chest making it hard to breathe. He moved his lips, trying to grasp something, but was speechless.

After a long silence, he rasped out, "Why?"

Anger flaring, he turned to Corley, raising his voice. "Im asking you why! Knowing Roseanne was my woman, why would you do this 7%