

Chapter 2

Jessamine couldn't help trembling underneath Thaddeus. She tried her best to keep her voice steady so he wouldn't realize she was crying. "I suppose congratulations are in order, then. I'm glad you're finally gonna end up with the woman you love."

In the dark, she gave Thaddeus blessings that didn't come from the heart. Sure enough, loving someone would humble one and make one set their dignity aside.

"Are you crying?"

"No," Jessamine said stubbornly.

Thaddeus didn't seem to be too happy with her blessing. He thrust harder into her, making her mind go blank.

When they finished, he lay atop her. Then, he whispered into her ear, "I hope you'll soon be reunited with your precious Malcolm, too. Seeing as we used to be married, you can always come to me if you need help."

Meanwhile, Jessamine was exhausted. She lay there limply and eventually fell into a deep sleep.

When she woke up the next morning, Thaddeus was long gone. He had more self-discipline than anyone she knew. No matter how late he stayed up, he would still wake up early every morning to work out, have breakfast, and watch the news.

He was like a robot with a system installed in it.

Jessamine washed up and headed downstairs. The morning news was on the TV, and the newscaster happened to be reporting about a failed rape attempt that had happened last night.

Thaddeus sat in the dining room with the sleeves of his black shirt rolled up, revealing toned arms. His broad shoulders held the shirt up nicely. As straight and unforgiving as he was, he'd never given her a shred of warmth throughout their marriage.

He held a finance magazine in his left hand and a sandwich in his right. He didn't seem interested in the morning news at all. The air he exuded was distant and cold.

The housekeeper, Lana Marshall, smiled when she saw Jessamine coming downstairs. "Would you like pasta or ravioli this morning, Mrs. Holt?"

Jessamine pursed her lips. "Anything's fine. I think you should address me as Ms. Patton from now on, Lana."

Lana's smile froze as she pondered the meaning of her words. Her gaze traveled between Thaddeus and Jessamine. She didn't dare to say anything in response.

"Do whatever she wants," Thaddeus said icily. His gaze was still focused on his magazine. He didn't even bother looking up.

Halfway through the meal, he got up and walked away. About a minute later, he threw two divorce agreements onto the table along with a check. "Sign these. You can write any number you want on the check."

Jessamine faltered. She raised her head to meet his dark gaze. He was the heir of Holt Jewelry, which controlled Zenville's economy. He was ruthless in the business world and never let anyone off the hook.

Yet she'd tried to make him fall for her and hoped to win his heart. How ridiculous.

Jessamine took a pen, flipped to the last page of the divorce agreements, and signed them without looking at the contents. "When are we gonna finalize this?"

A trace of displeasure flashed in Thaddeus' eyes. "Are you in that much of a rush?"

Jessamine had a ravioli, but it tasted like cardboard. Her expression was cool and calm, but her heart was in turmoil. She was so close to losing control that even her breathing was shaky.

She suppressed her emotions to the best of her abilities, not wanting to collapse before Thaddeus. At the very least, she wanted to retain the last shreds of her dignity.

"I don't want to keep you and Ms. Quilton waiting."

Thaddeus scoffed. He took the divorce agreements and signed his name on the last pages. "I think it's more like you're in a hurry to look for your precious Malcolm."