

The Ruined Bride of Velvet Nights by Brick Moving Ant

Chapter 4

Victoria’s eyes gleamed with venom as she leaned closer. “If I were you, I’d honestly just off myself. It would save everyone the trouble of looking at your fucked–up face.”

She waited eagerly for my reaction, desperate to see me crumble.

But I felt nothing. My heart was a dead thing in my chest. The Dagonet name meant nothing to me

now.

“I’ll leave. Take it all if you want it so badly.”

Victoria let out a high–pitched laugh. “God, you’re pathetic. While you’ve been getting your ass handed to you, I absolutely killed my SAB audition. Got my acceptance yesterday.” She tapped my wheelchair with her foot. “As for you… enjoy rolling around for the rest of your worthless life.”

Her voice dropped to a cruel whisper. “But that’s still not enough. I need them to hate you as much as

I do.”

Before I could process what was happening, she whipped out a small pocketknife and slashed her own cheek with practiced precision.

As she crumpled to the floor in a perfectly executed fall, Victoria hissed in my ear: “FYI, Daddy dearest only wanted those guys to rough you up a little. I’m the one who paid them extra to make sure you’d never dance again…”

Something cold and primal flashed in my eyes.

A heartbeat later, Victoria’s bloodcurdling screams echoed through the hospital.

Dad burst through the door, slamming my wheelchair aside as he rushed to Victoria’s side.

“Victoria! Jesus Christ, what happened?”

Caspian immediately barked at my doctors: “Help her! Now!”

No one even glanced at me lying on the floor, fresh blood seeping through my bandages.

Victoria covered her face, tears streaming down in perfect pathways, her voice trembling with

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manufactured fear.

“I’m s–so sorry! This is all my fault! I just wanted to tell Val how s–sorry I was about everything! Please, Val, please forgive me! I’ll do anything, just please stop hurting me!” She cowered dramatically, shielding her face.

Dad’s expression transformed into pure rage.

“Are you fucking kidding me? Victoria comes here out of the goodness of her heart, and you ATTACK her? What the hell is wrong with you?”

Caspian looked down at me with pure disgust. “You really are a psychotic bitch, aren’t you? Maybe those guys didn’t go far enough. If Victoria’s face scars, I swear to God, you’ll wish they’d finished the

job.”

They carried Victoria out, rushing her toward treatment as if she were critically wounded, never once looking back at me.

Perfect.

After today, we’d be nothing to each other anyway.

Dad spent the next hour hovering over Victoria during examinations, only remembering I existed after confirming her superficial scratch wouldn’t leave a mark.

He glanced at Caspian. “Swing by Ladurée and grab some of those raspberry macarons Val likes. She’s probably throwing a tantrum after getting called out.”

Barely ten minutes later, Dad’s phone lit up.

“Dad–” Caspian’s voice cracked with panic. “Val’s gone. She left some kind of suicide note. And the major shareholders just simultaneously pulled their investments from the company!”

From my Uber, I watched through the hospital’s security feed as Dad crashed into my empty room, face contorted with terror.

He grabbed a passing nurse by her scrubs. “Where the fuck is my daughter?!”

The nurse wrenched his hand away, her disgust palpable.

“Are you for real right now? That girl has suffered catastrophic trauma–both physical and

psychological. She’s severely depressed. And I heard what you people said to her.”

“You destroyed that poor girl, and now you have the audacity to demand answers? How would I know where she went?”

“Last I saw, she was sitting alone, sobbing her heart out while you all coddled that other girl. Completely abandoned.”

Dad released the nurse, staggering backward toward Caspian. “Let me see that note. Did she say

where she went? Is she safe?”

Caspian’s face was drained of color, his hands visibly shaking. “Dad… she’s done with us. For good.”

Dad snatched the letter, his voice breaking: “That’s impossible! Val’s always been my good girl. She’s never even stayed out past curfew. She wouldn’t just–she couldn’t–”

So they did know. They knew I was never the monster Victoria painted me to be.

Yet they’d sacrificed me without hesitation.

That letter–I’d written it with tears blurring the words on the page.

I documented everything: their whispered plans outside my door, Victoria’s confession, every betrayal in excruciating detail. I listed all of Victoria’s torments at school, their conspiracy against me, and the truth about who ordered my assault.

As he reached the end, Dad’s knees nearly buckled.

His voice emerged as a strangled whisper: “Find her. I don’t care what it costs. I don’t care who you have to pay. Tear this fucking city apart if you have to. I want my daughter back home!”

But it was too late.

I was already gone.

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