

# The Ruined Bride of Velvet Nights by Brick Moving Ant

Chapter 23

## Chapter 14

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Lysander couldn't shake the feeling that something was off about the "reborn" Ophelia. A subtle but persistent distance separated them.

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Her mannerisms, appearance, and voice nearly matched his memories perfectly, yet something felt

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wrong.

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Too perfect, too polished—like a program running flawlessly, but lacking the truly spark of life.

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Lysander shook his head. Perhaps he was just imagining things.

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As they strolled hand-in-hand through Columbia University's campus, Lysander guided Celeste along the tree-lined paths.

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They strolled past the historic buildings, pausing in front of the Hall of Distinguished Alumni.

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Lysander's portrait immediately caught Celeste's attention, but what truly captivated her was Navier's photograph beside his.

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'Navier was brilliant in her own right', Celeste thought, 'yet devoting to this man dimmed her light simply by existing. She deserved better than that fate.'

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'Leaving Lysander was the wisest decision Navier had ever made. Away from his shadow, she could truly shine brighter.'

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After lingering on Navier's photograph, Celeste finally tore her gaze away and offered insincere

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praise.

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"You were so impressive, Lysander!"

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"If I hadn't gotten sick back then, maybe... maybe my picture would be up here next to yours."

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She lowered her head in fabricated disappointment.

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Noticing her shift in mood, Lysander immediately pulled out his phone to call the university

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president.

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"Ophelia, if you still want to want to finish your studies, I'll arrange for you to enroll. You'll get your

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21:52

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The Ruined Bride of Velvet Nights

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19.7%

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## Chapter 14

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degree, and if you want your name on this wall, all I have to do is make a call."

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Celeste looked up at him with manufactured delight, her eyes sparkling.

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"Really? I could still go to college?"

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Before her excitement could build, she lowered her head again, biting her lip uncertainly,

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"Actually... I don't know if I should. Lysander, you know... I'm living in someone else's body now. It

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wouldn't be fair. Even if I ever made it onto that wall, I'd want to earn it honestly."

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She let her voice tremble, just a little. Just enough to sell the lie.

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"And there's something. After much struggle, I was reborn in this girl Celeste Stanley's body. She

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couldn't bear her life anymore and jumped into the river, which give me a chance to take over."

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"I didn't tell you before because I was worried you couldn't accept it. But I wanted to be honest. I

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don't want to have lies between us."

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Celeste deliberately mixed truth with fiction.

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Certain details would inevitably surface in Lysander's investigation. Better to reveal them herself

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-than let him discover more than she intended.

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This way, when he investigated, he'd only find that the old Celeste and the current one seemed like

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completely different people—reinforcing rather than undermining her story.

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Just as she anticipated, Lysander's suspicions largely dissolved after hearing her explanation. And

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his sympathy for her only deepened.

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"I don't care what body you're in. You're still Ophelia to me. All that matters is having you by my

.

side."

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"Whatever you want, it's yours. Just don't leave me again."

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"I'll call the president right now and arrange for Celeste Stanley to enroll. I won't interfere with the

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wall of distinction, but please stop refusing the advantages I can provide."

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Then his tone brooked no argument as he texted the university president.

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Celeste smiled with satisfaction. "Of course. Whatever you think is best."

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21:52

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The Ruined Bride of Velvet Nights

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19.9%

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## Chapter 14

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Even though her grades had been sufficient for Columbia in the past, her family had prevented her from attending.

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Now she could finally fulfill her dream of higher education!

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This was just the beginning. Everything she wanted—including what rightfully belonged to

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Navier—would soon be hers.

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Celeste lowered her eyes, concealing any trace of her true intentions behind a gentle smile.

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