

The Ruined Bride of Velvet Nights by Brick Moving Ant

Chapter 45

- Chapter 12
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- I stared at the photo, frozen in place.
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- My tears had long since dried up. My heart had finally, mercifully flatlined.
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- When we were little, my parents were always away on business trips. I'd spend most evenings at Zephyr's house, eating dinner and doing homework together.
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- I missed my parents desperately but hated making his mom worry about me.
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- I'd lock myself in their bathroom, muffling my sobs with a towel.
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- Zephyr caught me once. After that, he made sure I was never alone long enough to feel that emptiness, always inventing new games or projects to distract me.
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- Together, we spent a whole weekend making matching stuffed animals.
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- A little rabbit and a little dog.
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- I was terrible at sewing—all thumbs and frustration—but Zephyr showed endless patience, guiding
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- my hands through each stitch.
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- My fingers ended up covered in pinpricks, tiny dots of blood on my fingertips.
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- He'd gently blow on each one, his face scrunched with concern, promising it would get easier.
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- When he finally gave me the little dog he'd made, Zephyr looked so serious:
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- “Phoebe, whenever you're feeling lonely, this puppy will be me keeping you company. And my bunny will be you keeping me company.”
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- “The puppy and bunny will always be together, just like we'll always be there for each other.”
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- Now, his puppy still sat on my nightstand, threadbare from years of being held.
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- While my bunny—the physical embodiment of my childhood love—had been casually handed to another girl like a meaningless trinket.
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- 12:47
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- I opened my phone to Zephyr's contact.
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- His profile picture showed him grinning at the camera, the same smile I'd fallen for a thousand times before.
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- Delete. Block. Remove.
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- From my phone.
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- From my life.
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- From my future.
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- My broken heart became an anchor weighing down my recovery.
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- I spent days at home, methodically excavating the archaeology of our relationship.
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- Every gift, every memento, every physical reminder of what I thought we had.
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- The rare vinyl soundtrack he'd queued for six hours to buy when I went through my film score
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- obsession.
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- The Polaroid from that school trip to Iceland, where he wrapped his arms around me under the Northern Lights.
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- The vintage silver locket he found at that flea market in San Francisco, spending an entire Saturday
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- hunting for “something as unique as you.”
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The handwritten notes from middle school, folded into elaborate origami shapes.

The ticket stubs from concerts, movies, and museums.

Thirteen years of memories, tangible proof of what I'd believed was love.

Finally, the small dog plushie that was supposed to represent him, always watching over me.

Everything went into a large box. I sealed it with packing tape, layer after layer, as if containing something dangerous.

Then I shoved it deep into my closet, behind winter coats and old shoes.

12:47

The Ruined Bride of Velvet Nights

38.7%

Chapter 12

Buried, like the girl who had loved him so completely.

That girl was gone now. And I wasn't sure who would take her place.

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