The Ruined Bride of Velvet Nights by Brick Moving Ant

Chapter 51

• Chapter 18

•

- Taplyer and Kartini bergke up the following week
- sew tad appeared on the school Discord almost immediately.
- •
- didrs same dames, but the implications were crystal clear:
- •
- I was getuned as the obsessive ex who couldn't let go, who deliberately sabotaged his relationship with Katherine, who used my body to manipulate fum back into my life.
- •
- Through everyone was ordered to by initials, it was painfully obvious who was being discussed.
- •
- The post cluded eerily specific details about past interactions with Zephyr.
- •
- Katherine's digital fingerprints were all over it.
- •
- I read the entire thread during lunch and felt... nothing.
- •
- Tavas out, letting go of someone becomes surprisingly easy once you actually decide to do it.
- When you finally peel someone else's name off your heart, you discover your own voice had been there all along
- •
- I'd reclaimed nyself, and that was worth more than any relationship.
- •
- During AP Cals, a girl 1 barely knew passed me a note asking if it was true I'd "stolen Z back from K."
- •
- Fed up with the high school drama, I made a public post that evening:
- Phoebe. [Going offline to focus on finals and college prep. Stop tagging me. If you can solve this problem, maybe then we can discuss my personal life]
- •
- I attached the hardest differential equation from last year's national competition.
- •
- The comments filled with people posting "?" and calling me everything from "ice cold" to "academic queen"

•

- Only Sid replied with a complete, elegant solution.
- •
- The Ruined Bride of Velvet Nights
- •
- 43.6%
- •
- Chapter 13
- •
- Adding: [Does your desk partner pass the test?]
- •
- I responded: [You've definitely seen this before. Doesn't count)
- •
- Sid: [Give me your hardest problem then. I'll earn it]
- •
- Me: [–]
- •
- Zephyr commented too: [See you at UC Davis @Phoebe]
- •
- UC Davis-the school I had once rearranged my entire future around.
- •
- A reminder that meant absolutely nothing to me now.
- •
- I closed the app without replying.
- •
- Zephyr stopped his in-person ambushes.
- Instead, my desk began accumulating carefully selected gifts-cherry-flavored everything, indie band merch I'd once mentioned liking, premium stationery for my notes.
- I donated all of it to the freshman mentor program.

•

- He cycled through borrowing his friends' phones to text me.
- Sometimes demanding to know what was happening with Sid, sometimes swearing nothing physical had happened with Katherine.

•

- He even sent photos of the rabbit plushie sitting on his nightstand, claiming he'd "taken it back where it belongs."
- •
- I blocked each number methodically.
- •
- Never once typed a response.
- •
- The gossip mill churned out a romantic narrative: after my dramatic exit, Zephyr had experience
- •
- an epiphany.
- •
- He was supposedly studying with newfound determination, working to earn a spot at UC Davis, planning to prove himself worthy of a second chance.

4 Pride of Velvet Nights

43.9%

My friends told me, "Guys always realize what they had once it's gone. Classic."

That Zephyr was experiencing this storybook redemption arc.

But I didn't need that storyline anymore-I was writing my own.

After graduation, I handled one final piece of unfinished business.

When Zephyr arrived at my house that June evening, UC Davis acceptance letter in hand, proudly knocking on our front door-

All he found was an empty house with a SOLD sign in the yard and a sealed wooden box on the

porch.

Inside were all the artifacts from our shared history I'd methodically collected.

On top was the little dog plushie he'd made for me so many years ago.

A simple note attached to its worn ear read:

Goodbye, Zephyr.

I'm choosing a different story.

♡ (0)

(0)