

The Ruined Bride of Velvet Nights by Brick Moving Ant

Chapter 54

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 - Zephyr attempted to find me many more times that semester.
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 - I perfected the art of looking right through him.
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 - Meanwhile, Sid and I grew closer each day.
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 - During Stanford's chilly winters, he'd wrap his scarf around both our necks, warm my hands between his, and tuck me inside his coat when we walked across the windy quad.
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 - But unlike what I'd experienced before, he treated me with genuine respect and care.
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 - He always asked before even the smallest displays of affection, his cheeks flushing adorably when he'd lean in to kiss my forehead.
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 - We studied together in coffee shops, laughed over inside jokes no one else understood, and built the kind of relationship I hadn't known was possible—one where I felt both cherished and equal.
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 - Zephyr saw all of this from a distance.
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 - His jealousy eventually consumed him.”
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 - One night, after watching us leave a campus event together, he snapped and tried to physically
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 - separate us.
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 - I called campus security without a second thought, calmly providing my statement while they escorted him away.
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 - His eyes begged me for mercy or understanding.
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 - But there was nothing left in me that could be moved by his desperation.
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 - Months later, I heard through an old high school friend that he'd dropped out of UC Davis mid-sophomore year.
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 - He'd fallen back into his old patterns—drinking, fighting, street racing—but worse than before.
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 - Apparently, he would get blackout drunk and cry about his “childhood sweetheart” to anyone who
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 - would listen.
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 - His parents eventually cut him off financially after he wrecked his third luxury car.
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 - The golden boy had lost his shine, his future, and any sympathy I might once have felt.
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 - One sunny afternoon in my junior year, I sat cross-legged on my apartment floor, methodically going through my phone contacts and social media.
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 - I deleted the last few mutual connections we shared.
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 - Blocked the throwaway accounts he occasionally created.
- Removed myself from alumni groups where his name might appear.
- It wasn't about anger anymore—it was about space. About making room for the life I was building.
- As I completed this final digital cleanse, my phone lit up with a text:
- [On my way home. Found fresh cherries at the farmers market. The dark sweet ones you love.]
- I smiled, putting down my phone and looking out the window. The California sunshine streamed in, warming my face as I spotted Sid walking up the path to our apartment building, a paper bag cradled in one arm.
- I rushed downstairs to meet him, feeling lighter with each step.
- The door swung open to sunshine, fresh fruit, and the person who had taught me what love actually looked like.
- The past was finally where it belonged—behind me.

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