

Rebirth After Being Betrayed by My Husband (Lily and Ryan)

Rebirth After Being Betrayed by My Husband

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Authur and Beatrice exchanged startled glances when Lily calmly accepted their demand. Their brows furrowed in confusion.

"Young lady, we are the Collins Family. Do you think money is something we lack? Just state your price. Not matter how high, we can meet it," Authur said firmly before turning to his daughter. "See, princess? Love is nothing compared to wealth."

Ivy's eyes welled up with tears as she stepped forward. "Sister-in-law, why? Why are you doing this? My brother loves you deeply..."

Beatrice crossed her arms, her voice sharp. "What more can you expect from a woman in the entertainment industry?"

Authur pressed again, "So, what is your price?"

Lily smiled softly, then turned to Ethan, gently brushing his hair back before placing a tender kiss on his forehead. "My price... is this man right here. This unconscious yet precious man is worth more to me than anything money can buy. He completes my world, and with him by my side, I need nothing else."

She took a steady breath and turned back to face her in-laws. "Mr. and Mrs. Collins, this is my price. Are you willing to give him to me?"

The room fell into stunned silence. Everyone stared at Lily in disbelief. Authur and Beatrice exchanged another glance-and then, unexpectedly, they burst into laughter.

Lily, along with everyone else in the room, was left utterly baffled.

Through her laughter, Beatrice managed to speak. "Arthur, didn't I tell you? Our daughter-in-law is incredibly clever. I said she'd give us this exact answer! You owe me now."

Author sighed dramatically, shaking his head. "Alright, alright. I admit defeat. You win."

The confusion in the room only deepened.

Ivy stepped closer, her voice laced with curiosity and concern. "Mom? Dad? What are you two talking about? A bet? What bet?"

Beatrice grinned playfully. "Before coming here, your father and I made a little wager. I predicted that Lily would name Ethan as her price, while your father thought she'd ask for something else. Clearly, I won."

"But what about all those harsh words you said to Sister-in-law earlier? Were those... were those part of the bet too?" Ivy asked hesitantly.

Beatrice chuckled, waving her hand dismissively. "Oh, that? We were just putting on an act to test her."

Everyone in the room collectively froze, their expressions a mix of disbelief and relief.

Beatrice approached Lily, her sharp gaze softening as she took in the young woman's composed expression. "You're truly a beautiful and remarkable woman, Lily."

Lily blinked, slightly flustered. "T-Thank you, Mrs. Collins."

With a warm smile, Beatrice continued, "Dear, don't take anything we said earlier to heart. We only wanted

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lifetime filled with love and happiness."

Lily nodded, her eyes glistening with gratitude, as the tension in the room finally melted away.

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Author stepped forward to stand beside Beatrice, his expression serious but kind. "But before we officially acknowledge you as our daughter-in-law, you must agree to two conditions," he said firmly.

Lily's heart raced with nervous anticipation. "What conditions?" she asked cautiously.

"First, you must call us Mom and Dad," Authur said with a grin. "And second, you must give us adorable grandchildren soon!"

Lily's eyes widened in surprise before her cheeks turned pink. She nodded shyly and said, "Okay... Mom and Dad."

Hearing her sweet response, both Authur and Beatrice burst into laughter. Their earlier tension had completely dissolved, and the warmth in their smiles spoke volumes.

In truth, the Collins couple had known about Lily's situation with her family ever since their son married her. When they first learned about Ethan's sudden marriage, their emotions had been mixed. They were overjoyed because Ethan had always been distant and disinterested in relationships. Seeing him fall in love had been an unexpected but delightful surprise. However, they were also slightly disappointed because they had initially hoped Ethan would marry their best friend's daughter. Lastly, they were a little angry that he hadn't informed them about his marriage beforehand.

But in the end, love prevailed, and seeing their son genuinely happy with Lily eased all their worries.

"My dear daughter-in-law, tell me honestly-how was my acting just now? Was it convincing?" Authur suddenly asked, his eyes sparkling with excitement.

The room collectively sighed. Everyone knew about Mr. Arthur's obsession with acting.

Lily chuckled softly. "Yes, Dad, it was very convincing!" she said with a thumbs-up.

Authur beamed proudly. "Did you hear that? Even my daughter-in-law agrees that I have what it takes to be a great actor! I told you I could do it. Now, where is that Parker?"

Parker, who had been stealthily hiding behind James and Mia, froze in place.

"Please don't see me. Please don't see me. I'm invisible," he muttered under his breath.

Ivy, catching on, smirked and leaned toward her father. "Dad, he's hiding behind Brother James and Sister Mia."

Authur's sharp eyes zeroed in on Parker. "Parker! What are you doing back there? Are you hiding from me again?"

Parker awkwardly stepped out from behind his friends, his smile nervous. "Uncle, why would I hide from you? That's ridiculous!"

"Oh really? Then what were you doing back there?" Authur asked, crossing his arms.

"Uh... There was a bug! Yes, a bug on James's back. I was just helping him remove it!" Parker stammered, flashing his best innocent smile.

Authur raised an eyebrow but decided to let it slide. "Anyway, Parker, did you hear? Even my daughter-in-

Jaw thinks I could be a great actor. Should I visit your company tomorrow to sign a contract?

Parker's face paled as he glanced around for help. His so-called friends avoided his gaze, pretending to be deeply interested in the ceiling.

"Uncle, you see"

Before he could finish, Beatrice interrupted with a teasing smile. "Authur, you're already so old. Why are you still dreaming about being an actor? It's not your calling"

Authur gasped in mock offense. "Old? You didn't say that last night!"

Beatrice's face turned crimson as she glared at him. "What nonsense are you talking about in front of the children?"

The room erupted into laughter. The light-hearted banter lifted everyone's spirits, and the earlier tension melted away completely.

Amidst the laughter and chatter, everyone almost forgot about the man lying on the bed-who had, at some point, already woken up and was quietly watching them with a faint smile on his lips.

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Ethan had already regained consciousness when he overheard his parents discussing two conditions with Lily. Initially, as he opened his eyes, he felt a wave of confusion. Where was he? What had happened? One by one, fragmented memories of the accident began flooding back into his mind.

The first thought that struck him was about his wife. Where was she? She had been waiting for him, and he was supposed to pick her up. Had she heard about the accident? If so, she must have been frantic with

worry.

Unable to move much due to his injuries, Ethan turned his head slightly and realized he was in a hospital. His parents were seated nearby, happily chatting with Lily. Watching the smile on his wife's face brought a wave of relief to his heart.

Before the accident, he had often worried about whether his parents would accept Lily as their daughter-in-law. He knew they had already chosen someone for him—the daughter of their closest friends. It had been a delicate situation, and Ethan wasn't sure how things would unfold.

But now, seeing the scene in front of him, he felt a sense of joy and peace. His parents had clearly embraced Lily, and their warm interaction reassured him. It meant the world to him that his wife now had someone to call "Mom" and "Dad," filling the void of parental love she had missed during her childhood.

Ethan silently promised himself that he would do everything in his power to find her biological parents and reunite them as one big, happy family. Until then, he was grateful that his own parents could provide her with the affection and care she deserved.

For a while, Ethan enjoyed watching the lively atmosphere in the room. The teasing and laughter among his parents and Lily were heartwarming. But as time

ticked by, he began to feel a little sour. It had been over ten minutes since he'd woken up, yet no one seemed to notice him.

He watched them joke and pull each other's legs, completely engrossed in their banter. His lips formed a small pout as he realized his wife's attention was entirely on them instead of him. The longer it went on, the more he felt like a forgotten patient.

How could they ignore me? he thought indignantly. I'm the one lying here injured, and they're busy having fun without me? And my wife... how could she let them take her attention away from me?

The thought made him grumble internally. Heartless people! Cruel Wife Attention Grabbers!

Determined to reclaim the spotlight, Ethan cleared his throat and coughed loudly, breaking the lively chatter. The sudden sound startled everyone, and they all turned toward him. Finally, they realized that the patient they had been happily ignoring was wide awake and waiting for their attention.

As Ethan's eyes fluttered open, Lily's face lit up with a bright smile. She rushed to his bedside, her voice filled with relief and excitement. "Ethan, you're awake!"

He blinked a few times, his gaze meeting hers, calm and unreadable.

"How are you feeling?" she asked softly, leaning closer. "Do you need anything? Should I call the doctor? Are you in any pain?"

"W-water," Ethan croaked in a hoarse voice, his throat dry.

Lily quickly nodded, pouring a glass of water with trembling hands. She adjusted his bed carefully, helping him sit upright before holding the glass to his lips. He took a few sips, his parched throat finally soothed.

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"Thank you so much, beautiful lady," Ethan murmured, his tone polite.

Lily froze mid-smile, blinking in confusion. Did he just call me... beautiful lady? "W-what did you just call me?" she stammered, her heart sinking.

"Beautiful lady," he repeated innocently. "I'm sorry... I don't know your name. Are you the nurse?" His gaze wandered around the room before landing on his parents. "Mom? Dad? You're here too. What's going on? Why am I in a hospital?" It was as if Lily had been struck by lightning. Her body stiffened, and tears welled up in her eyes as her mind struggled to process his words.

Everyone in the room froze, their faces mirroring the same shock. Beatrice, Ethan's mother, stepped forward, her expression scrutinizing. She looked into her son's eyes, trying to read him.

Under his mother's sharp gaze, Ethan swallowed hard but managed to maintain his indifferent expression.

"Ethan, you don't remember anything?" Beatrice asked, her tone both concerned and probing.

"No, Mom," Ethan replied, his hand moving to rub his forehead as though in pain. "What am I doing here? What happened to me?"

Beatrice's lips curled into a knowing smirk. Ah, so my son thinks he can fool me? she mused silently. You may be a good actor, Ethan, but I'm your mother. Let's see how long you can keep up this charade.

While Beatrice saw through Ethan's act, everyone else in the room looked genuinely unsettled. Parker, Ethan's best friend, was the first to recover. Grabbing Ethan's hand, he asked urgently, "You really don't remember anything?"

"What are you talking about, Parker?" Ethan asked, his voice laced with confusion. "Can someone please tell me what's going on?" His eyes flicked briefly toward Lily, who stood frozen, tears glistening in her eyes.

This is just a little lesson, my dear wife, for ignoring me earlier, Ethan thought mischievously, his heart chuckling while his face stayed stoic.

Tang Jun, standing nearby, decided to explain. "You were in an accident, Ethan. Your car crashed earlier today, and that's why you're here."

"Oh," Ethan said slowly, as if piecing everything together. "That explains the hospital, but..." He paused, looking back at Parker. "You all keep saying I've forgotten something. What is it?"

"Well... you, um... forgot her," Parker stammered awkwardly, pointing toward Lily. "Her?" Ethan frowned, turning his gaze to Lily. "Who is she?"

Parker opened his mouth to respond, ready to reveal the truth, but Beatrice quickly stepped in. Before Parker could say "wife," she gave him a sharp nudge and smiled slyly.

"She's Parker's wife," Beatrice said smoothly, pushing Lily toward Parker with a practiced nonchalance.

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Lily, caught completely off guard by her mother-in-law's unexpected push, stumbled forward and nearly fell into Parker's arms.

"Are you okay?" Parker asked quickly, steadying her before she could lose her balance entirely.

Meanwhile, Ethan, who had been thoroughly enjoying his little act of pretending to have amnesia, suddenly froze. His amusement evaporated as he watched the scene unfold before him. Seeing Lily in Parker's arms made his stomach churn with a sour, jealous feeling. It felt like he had just gulped down 100 jars of vinegar.

His expression darkened as his sharp eyes focused on Parker's hands, still holding onto Lily. Sure, he was grateful that Parker had prevented his wife from falling, but why was he still holding her?

Sensing the piercing glare, Parker turned his head cautiously toward Ethan. The intensity of Ethan's expression sent a chill down his spine. What did I do to deserve this? Parker thought nervously.

Without wasting another second, he quickly let go of Lily and backed away, creating a noticeable gap between them. Stammering, he tried to explain, "I... I- I... She... she is-"

Before Parker could finish, Beatrice stepped in with a perfectly calm and composed voice. "Parker, dear, there's no need to be so nervous around your best friend. Lily is your wife, after all. You can go ahead and tell him that."

Parker's jaw dropped, and he stared at Beatrice in disbelief. Auntie! Do you not care about me? Why are you throwing me into the fire? Why do you want me to be the scapegoat here?

Everyone in the room, including Lily, was stunned by Beatrice's sudden declaration. Lily opened her mouth to question her mother-in-law's behavior, but before she could speak, Beatrice gave her a sly wink.

Lily furrowed her brows, glancing between Beatrice and Ethan. When her gaze settled on Ethan's face, she saw it—the unmistakable look of jealousy etched into his features. Suddenly, everything clicked. Her mother-in-law was playing along to tease Ethan.

Realizing the game, Lily narrowed her eyes at her husband, then turned back to Beatrice with a knowing smile. She nodded subtly, deciding to join in the fun.

Ethan, consumed by jealousy, failed to notice the silent exchange between his wife and mother. What had started as a simple prank to get back at Lily for ignoring him had quickly spiraled out of his control. Now, he was the one feeling the sting of his own jealousy.

Lily smiled sweetly and, much to Ethan's horror, slipped her arm through Parker's. "Darling," she said in a playful, coquettish tone, "your best friend, Ethan, seems to have forgotten who I am. Don't you think you should introduce your wife to him again?" As she spoke, she gave Parker a sharp pinch on the arm.

Parker winced, his eyes widening in panic. Sister-in-law! You too? Do you have no mercy? What darling? What wife? I'm not even married yet!

He could feel goosebumps spreading across his skin as Lily's words echoed in his ears. From the corner of his eye, he glanced at Ethan. His heart nearly stopped at the sight of his best friend's thunderous expression. The murderous look on Ethan's face was enough to make him shiver uncontrollably.

So scary... Parker thought miserably. He wanted to cry, but no tears came. Mom, someone, anyone... save me! This mother-in-law and daughter-in-law duo is ganging up on me!

"Darling why aren't you introducing me? Come on your best friend is curious to know who I am" Lily said

with an innocent pout, her playful tone adding fuel to the fire.

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Ethan's jaw tightened as jealousy surged through him. He glared at his wife, completely ignoring Parker, who stood beside her, looking increasingly uncomfortable. This little game had gone on long enough. His so-called amnesia act was losing its charm, especially since all he wanted now was for his wife to be by his side, holding his hand, not Parker's.

Just as he opened his mouth to drop the charade, his mother interrupted once again, her timing impeccable.

"Son," Beatrice chimed in, her tone laced with mischief, "it seems like Parker is too nervous to introduce his wife to you. Allow me to step in on his behalf." She gestured toward Lily with a knowing smile. "This is Lily, Parker's wife. Take a good look at her-do you remember anything now?"

Beatrice smirked at the irritation flashing across Ethan's face. She had been watching closely and knew he was on the verge of confessing the truth. Of course, she couldn't let that happen so soon. After all, her dear daughter-in-law deserved a little vindication for almost being brought to tears by her husband's teasing.

"Mr. Ethan, do you recall anything?" Lily asked sweetly, though the mischievous glint in her eyes was impossible to miss. "You attended our wedding, remember? I was wearing a stunning white gown as I walked down the aisle. Parker was waiting for me at the altar, and when I placed my hand in his, the ceremony began. We exchanged rings and vows..."

Her words painted a vivid picture that made Ethan's face darken with every passing second.

"And, Mr. Ethan," she added with a sly smile, "you even gave us a wonderful gift. Surely that jogs your memory? You gifted us our honeymoon-

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"Stop! I remember! I remember everything!" Ethan burst out, his voice rising with frustration. As Lily's words replayed in his mind, he couldn't help but imagine her in a gorgeous white gown, radiating an ethereal beauty as she walked down the

aisle. But when she placed her hand in the groom's, it wasn't him standing there—it was Parker. The mental image alone was enough to make his blood boil.

Gritting his teeth, Ethan looked directly at Lily and declared, "You're not his wife. I remember everything now. Leave his hand, Lily. You're his wife."

Lily blinked, feigning confusion. "Darling, I think we need to call a doctor. Mr. Ethan is saying all kinds of nonsense. How could I possibly be his wife? I'm clearly yours."

"Lily, stop this," Ethan pleaded, his tone softening as he realized how much his prank had backfired. "You're my wife. I remember everything now. I was wrong—please just let this go."

Lily, however, wasn't ready to end the game. Smiling sweetly, she replied, "Mr. Ethan, I understand your confusion. You've been through a terrible accident and hit your head pretty hard. Memory lapses and disorientation are perfectly normal in these situations."

She leaned slightly closer, her voice dripping with playful menace. "But if you still don't believe me, I have a way to convince you. What if I kiss Parker? Would that make things clearer for you?"

The room fell silent.

Parker, who had been trying to stay out of the line of fire, stiffened in terror. His eyes darted between Lily and Ethan, who now looked like he was about to explode.

"Darling," Lily continued, turning to Parker with a coy smile, "there's no need to be shy. We're husband and wife, after all..." She leaned toward him, her intention clear.

Parker froze, his face pale. Why me? he thought, silently praying for a miracle. "Lily, no—" Ethan's voice rang out, but it was quickly cut off by a sharp cry of pain.

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Lily immediately stopped, rushing to Ethan's side. "Ethan! Are you alright? Where does it hurt?" she asked, her playful demeanor vanishing as concern filled her voice.

Ethan, seizing the opportunity, reached out with his uninjured hand and grabbed her by the neck, pulling her close. Without giving her a chance to protest, he pressed his lips firmly against hers, effectively silencing

her.

The room seemed to stand still as Ethan poured all his frustration, jealousy, and love into the kiss. When he finally pulled back, his eyes locked onto hers. "You're mine, Lily," he said firmly, his voice leaving no room for argument.

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As the couple lost themselves in their kiss, the warmth and intensity of their emotions were palpable to everyone in the room. The onlookers smiled knowingly, sensing they were witnessing a moment too intimate to intrude upon. Authur gently cleared his throat, signaling to Beatrice. With a shared understanding, they quietly left the room, followed by the others, leaving Ethan and Lily alone to savor their reunion.

Ethan's kiss was initially rough, a vent for his bottled-up frustration, jealousy, and irritation. He nipped and claimed her lips as if to erase all traces of the earlier events that had tormented him. Gradually, the kiss softened, transforming into something tender and deeply emotional. Lily took the lead, pouring her unspoken fears and overwhelming relief into the kiss.

Every touch conveyed her emotions-how terrified she had been, how helpless she had felt, and how desperately she needed him by her side. Through that kiss, she clung to the reassurance that he was alive, safe, and there with her. She kissed him as if the world might end if she didn't, holding on to him like a lifeline.

By the time their lips parted, both were breathless. Lily closed her eyes and leaned against Ethan's chest, careful not to aggravate his injuries. She clung to him tightly, her trembling form a testament to her lingering fear of losing him.

Ethan smiled softly, his hand gently patting her back to soothe her. His gaze softened as he looked down at her. She was holding on to him as though she feared he might vanish.

"Lily, were you scared?" he asked in a gentle voice.

Lily shook her head against his chest, her voice barely a whisper. "No..." But as the words left her lips, her eyes welled up, and the dam holding back her emotions broke. She started crying, her sobs muffled against his chest.

Her sudden tears sent Ethan into a panic. "Lily, what's wrong? Why are you crying? Look at me I'm fine. Nothing happened to me. Please, don't cry, baby," he pleaded, his voice filled with worry. But his reassurances only made her cry harder.

"I-I was so scared," she hiccupped, her words coming out between sobs. "I was so worried about you! And the first thing you did after waking up was that stupid amnesia act. You're horrible, Ethan! I hate you-I hate you so much!" Her words, laced with heartbreak and frustration, made him feel a pang of guilt.

Ethan tightened his arms around her, wincing slightly at the pain it caused but refusing to let it show. "Lily, I'm so sorry. I shouldn't have done that. It was wrong of me. Please, forgive me," he said softly, his voice filled with regret.

But she didn't loosen her grip, holding him even tighter. "You're so bad," she muttered through her tears.

"I know, baby. I'm a bad person. It was my fault, and I'm sorry. If you want, you can punish me however you like-just stop crying, please," he begged, his voice cracking. "I promise I'll never do something like this again."

Her sobs quieted a little as she looked up at him with tear-filled eyes. "Really? Promise me, Ethan. Promise me you'll never say or do anything like that again."

"I promise," he said without hesitation, wiping her tears away with his thumb. He placed a gentle kiss on her forehead. "I'm so sorry, Lily."

She sniffled and leaned into him. "You're my life. Ethan. I can't bear to live without you."

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Her words struck him deeply, and a radiant smile spread across his face. Her indirect confession filled his heart with joy. But just as quickly, his expression darkened as he remembered her earlier words,

"Lily," he said, his voice tinged with jealousy, "earlier, who did you say your husband was? Who did you call 'darling?'"

His pout made her giggle softly through her remaining tears, but she didn't answer right away, enjoying his

reaction.

Lily chuckled at his question, her laughter light and teasing. She felt his grip on her tighten and noticed the hint of jealousy in his tone. Looking up into his eyes, she grinned mischievously, "Parker... Why? Were you jealous?"

"Hmph..." Ethan pouted, nodding like a child caught sulking. "Why did you say that?" he asked, his brows furrowing in mock seriousness.

Lily's eyes narrowed as she countered, "Well, who told you to pretend you didn't know me and act like you had amnesia?"

"Huh? That..." Ethan hesitated, then smirked, pinching her nose playfully. "I was punishing you."

"Punishing me? For what?" she asked, startled by his response.

"For ignoring your poor husband!" Ethan declared, feigning indignation. "You didn't even realize I was awake! Instead, you were busy fussing over everyone else. Your attention wasn't on me at all." His tone turned childlike as he continued, "Those useless friends of mine completely stole your focus, so I had to teach you a lesson."

Lily stared at him in disbelief, crossing her arms. "What kind of twisted logic is that? Shouldn't you be punishing your friends instead of me?"

Ethan shrugged nonchalantly, poking her nose with a grin. "That's my logic," he replied confidently. Tightening his hold on her waist, he leaned in closer, his voice dipping to a possessive tone. "Because I want my beautiful wife's attention all to myself."

"Possessive much?" she teased, raising an eyebrow.

"Absolutely," Ethan said without hesitation, pressing a kiss to her forehead. "How could I not be? With a wife as beautiful and talented as you, I can't take any chances. What if someone tries to steal you from me?"

Lily couldn't help but laugh at his absurd worry. "Don't be ridiculous! Who would even dare to steal something from the great Ethan?"

"Exactly," he agreed, nodding confidently. But his eyes darkened for a brief moment as he added inwardly, If anyone dares, I'll make their life a living nightmare.

As his gaze shifted to her soft, slightly swollen lips, Ethan leaned in, ready to claim another kiss. But before he could, Lily stopped him, placing her palm firmly against his mouth.

He blinked in confusion, raising an eyebrow in silent question. That's when he noticed her sly smirk.

"You said I could punish you however I want, didn't you?" Lily asked, her tone playful yet filled with

purpose.

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"Huh? Did I really say that?" Ethan asked, feigning innocence with an exaggeratedly innocent expression. "Lily, are you sure you didn't mishear? I don't remember saying anything about punishments."

Lily narrowed her eyes at him, glaring with suspicion. "Ethan... you did say it. Don't even try to deny it!"

He sighed, realizing he had no escape. "Alright, fine. I admit it. You can punish me," he said with an air of mock defeat. "Don't worry, I'll be completely obedient and at your mercy."

Before Lily could make sense of his words, Ethan continued with a mischievous glint in his eyes. Leaning closer, he gave her a cheeky wink. "You can do whatever you want with my body. Tie my right hand, blindfold me, and then take off my clothes one by one. You could even use a whip or candles..."

Her eyes widened in absolute shock. The meaning behind his shameless words hit her like a bolt of lightning. Her cheeks flushed bright red, and her jaw dropped in disbelief.

"Ethan!" she exclaimed, immediately covering his mouth with her hand. "Shut up! What nonsense are you even talking about?"

He removed her hand with a pout. "What? Did I say something wrong? Don't tell me you don't like this kind of... excitement?"

"Of course, I don't-" she began to retort but froze halfway.

"Oh, you do like it!" Ethan interrupted, his eyes lighting up. "That's perfect! Then we can definitely try it-"

"No! No, I don't like it!" Lily almost cried out, horrified at his brazen suggestion. "Stop saying such shameless things, Ethan. That's not what I meant by punishment!"

Feigning disappointment, he sighed dramatically. "Oh, how tragic... But just think about it, Lily. Picture this: your incredibly handsome husband lying on the bed, his hands tied, blindfolded, and absolutely nothing covering his body. Completely at your mercy. Just imagine it..."

Despite her best efforts, the vivid image he painted crept into her mind. She gulped, her cheeks burning hotter than ever. Realization quickly snapped her out of it, and she shook her head furiously.

"Ethan!" she yelled, glaring at her mischievous husband. "You're in a hospital! What kind of nonsense are you imagining?"

"I'm not imagining nonsense," he replied, grinning wickedly. "I'm being completely practical. This is all for your benefit, my dear."

She rolled her eyes, scoffing at his absurd claim. "My benefit? Yeah, right. You're just a shameless pervert trying to take advantage of me while you're injured."

Feigning offense, he gasped dramatically. "That's not true! There are two benefits for you, actually. First," he said, leaning closer with a smug grin, "you'd get to see your incredibly handsome husband... completely naked."

Lily groaned, rolling her eyes so hard it almost hurt. "What's the second benefit?" she asked, crossing her arms impatiently.

"Well..." He hesitated for a moment before smirking. "You'd be fulfilling the second condition my parents gave you."

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Her eyes widened in surprise, "Wait, you were awake when they talked about that?"

He nodded, confirming it. "Oh, I heard everything. Which means," he said, glancing meaningfully at her lips, "we should probably start working on that condition. You know... the baby."

Lily's face turned crimson as she realized what he meant. She instinctively moved a little further from him, scolding, "Ethan! You're in a hospital! Where are your manners?"

"Manners?" he repeated with a smirk. "Never heard of them. When it comes to my wife, I'm a shameless pervert through and through." He laughed, then reached out to pull her closer. "Now, come here. I want to kiss you."

"No!" she shot back, crossing her arms with a triumphant smile. "No kissing allowed-for a whole month. That's your punishment."

Ethan stared at her, horrified. "A month? No kissing? That's way too cruel! You can't treat an injured man like this, Lily. Have some mercy!" he pleaded desperately, his voice filled with mock despair.

Lily felt her resolve weaken as she looked into Ethan's pleading eyes and saw the pout on his face. She sighed softly, giving in slightly. "Alright... two weeks," she said with a small smile.

"That's still too long!" he argued, his voice tinged with exaggerated despair. "How about one minute instead?"

Lily's eyes widened in disbelief. "One minute? Absolutely not! It's either two weeks or.... you can sleep on the couch for a whole month. Your choice!"

Faced with her stern tone, Ethan frowned like a child who had just lost his favorite toy. "Fine," he muttered reluctantly. "Two weeks it is. No kissing for two whole weeks!"

"Good," Lily replied with a triumphant smile, feeling satisfied with her decision.

Their moment was interrupted by a knock at the door. Turning her head, Lily saw the doctor and a nurse entering. They greeted her warmly before approaching Ethan. The doctor asked him a few routine questions and conducted a quick check-up to ensure everything was progressing well. After confirming that Ethan was recovering properly, the doctor left the nurse to relay some instructions to Lily.

The nurse carefully explained how to care for Ethan during his recovery, listing the dos and don'ts. Lily listened intently, committing every detail to memory. Once the nurse left, leaving the couple alone again, Ethan turned his attention back to Lily. He immediately noticed the exhaustion etched on her face—the dark circles under her eyes, the slight droop in her shoulders, and her overall fatigue. "Have you eaten anything?" Ethan asked gently, concern evident in his tone. "Yes, I have," she replied, stifling a yawn.

Ethan shifted slightly and gestured to her. "Help me move a bit."

Lily hurried to his side, carefully assisting him as he adjusted his position on the bed. He scooted over to one side, making enough space for her.

"The bed's big enough for both of us. Come here and rest," he said, patting the empty space beside him.

"But your injuries—" Lily hesitated, worried about causing him discomfort.

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"Lily," he interrupted, his voice soft yet insistent, "I already can't kiss you for two weeks. At least let me hold you while I sleep. Please?"

She sighed, her concern warring with her desire to comfort him. In the end, his pleading eyes won her over. Adjusting the bed slightly, she carefully lay down beside him. Ethan wrapped an arm around her, holding her close but ensuring not to strain his injuries.

"Good night, Ethan," Lily murmured, her eyes closing almost immediately.

"Good night, my love," he replied, pressing a gentle kiss to her forehead before closing his own eyes.

In the quiet room, the steady rhythm of their breathing became a soothing melody as they drifted into a peaceful sleep together.

ETE

548

Rebirth After Being Betrayed by My Husband (Lily and Ryan)

12 Mar

Rebirth After Being Betrayed by My Husband

.86%1

+8 Pearls

As Ethan watched Lily sleeping peacefully beside him, a soft smile graced his lips. He leaned over and placed a tender kiss on her forehead. Gently pulling the blanket over them, he leaned back against the pillow, his mind quickly sinking into a whirl of thoughts.

Moments later, a quiet knock on the door broke his reverie. "Come in," Ethan called out softly, careful not to disturb Lily's rest.

The door creaked open, revealing his parents and a few others. Beatrice stepped forward, her voice soft but still audible. "Ethan, Lily-" she began, but she stopped when her gaze fell on Lily's sleeping figure.

"Shh." Ethan hushed, raising a finger to his lips to signal silence. He glanced at his parents meaningfully. "She's exhausted. Let her sleep," he said in a whisper.

Understanding his concern, Beatrice and Authur kept their voices low. "Son, are you feeling alright now?" Authur asked in a hushed tone.

"I'm fine, Dad," Ethan replied calmly.

His parents sat by his bedside for a brief chat, exchanging a few words about his recovery before leaving with Ivy. Mia, after asking about his health, excused herself as well since it was already late.

Now, only Parker, James, and Assistant Ben remained in the room.

"How's the driver doing? Is he recovering?" Ethan asked, shifting the conversation to the man injured during the incident.

Assistant Ben nodded solemnly. "Yes, he was seriously injured, but he's out of danger now."

"Good. Speak with his family and make sure they have everything they need," Ethan instructed firmly.

"Yes, boss," Ben replied, his tone professional.

The room fell silent for a moment before Parker spoke, his brows furrowed with concern. "Ethan, what happened? The crash-it doesn't add up. I checked your car. The brakes, the tires, everything was in perfect condition. So how did it happen?"

Ethan's expression darkened, and an icy glint appeared in his eyes. The atmosphere in the room shifted instantly, the temperature seeming to drop. His friends instinctively tensed, sensing the storm brewing within him.

"Ethan, are you okay?" Parker asked cautiously, his worry evident.

"No," Ethan said through gritted teeth, his voice low but laced with fury. "I'm far from okay. Someone tried to kill me. This wasn't an accident-it was deliberate."

"What?" the three exclaimed in unison, their shock evident.

Ethan's jaw tightened as he recalled the incident. "It was planned. Someone tampered with the car, ensuring I would crash. It's only by luck that it happened before I picked Lily up. If she had been with me..." His voice trailed off, his eyes flashing with a mixture of rage and fear.

He tightened his hold on Lily, pulling her closer as if to reassure himself that she was safe. Placing another kiss on her forehead, he exhaled deeply, attempting to calm the storm inside him.

"Who would dare to target you?" Parker asked, his tone hardening. The idea of someone stalking the Collins Family infuriated him.

"I don't know," Ethan replied, his gaze cold and resolute. "But I'm certain this isn't over. Whoever it is... they'll come after me again"

The room fell into a heavy silence, the weight of Ethan's words sinking in. His friends exchanged worried glances, silently vowing to support him through whatever danger lay ahead. Ethan's jaw clenched as he made a silent promise of his own: whoever dared to threaten his life-and by extension, the safety of his beloved wife-would face his wrath.

In the business world, Ethan was both feared and revered-a formidable figure often referred to as the "Devil King." Yet, with such power came resentment, and there were countless individuals who harbored ill will toward him. His position as a member of one of the three most prestigious families shielded him from direct attacks; few dared to cross that line.

But this time felt different. This new adversary seemed to hold no regard for the influence or might of the three powerful families. This audacity unsettled Ethan, not because he feared for himself, but because his life was now intertwined with Lily's. The thought of her being endangered because of him was a risk he couldn't bear.

"What about the CCTV cameras? Do you think they might have captured anything?" Parker asked, his voice tinged with both concern and frustration.

James shook his head with a sigh. "Highly unlikely. If this enemy is bold enough to make a move on Ethan, they would be careful enough not to leave any evidence behind."

Assistant Ben, standing nearby, suddenly recalled a detail. "Boss, I spoke with the injured driver's family earlier. They mentioned receiving a significant amount of money from an anonymous sender."

"Oh?" Ethan raised an eyebrow, intrigued. "Anything else?"

Assistant Ben shook his head. It was puzzling. The enemy orchestrated the accident, ensured they were taken to the hospital safely, and then compensated the driver's family. The motives behind these actions were murky at best.

James crossed his arms thoughtfully. "It seems like this enemy, despite their malicious intent, operates with some twisted sense of morality."

"Morality?" Parker scoffed. "This isn't about morals. It's a clear message: Ethan is the only target."

James fell silent, conceding to Parker's point.

"What's your next move?" James finally asked.

Ethan glanced at his friends before his gaze softened as it fell on Lily, who remained fast asleep beside him. Gently brushing his fingers along her cheek, he responded in a calm, measured tone, "The enemy hides in the shadows while I am out in the open. Until we uncover more about them, any rash action would be futile."

He straightened, his demeanor turning steely. "Assistant Ben, I want heightened security. Reinforce protection around the Mansion, my home, and the company. Vet every guard carefully before assigning them to their posts. Also, deploy the elite guards-place them discreetly around every member of the Collins Family. No one is to be left vulnerable."

"Yes, boss!" Assistant Ben acknowledged. Without wasting a moment, he left to implement Ethan's orders.

*86%#

+8 Pearls

After a brief discussion, James and Parker also excused themselves, offering their unwavering support: should Ethan need them.

Left alone once more, Ethan allowed himself a moment to breathe. He looked down at Lily, her peaceful face soothing the storm within him. Placing a soft kiss on her forehead, he closed his eyes, silently vowing to protect her and his loved ones at all costs.

As sleep finally claimed him, Ethan's thoughts lingered on one pressing truth: this enemy was unpredictable, and until their identity and motives were revealed, no one was truly safe.

Rebirth After Being Betrayed by My Husband (Lily and Ryan)

+ Pearis

The next morning, Lily stirred awake, her eyes fluttering open to a room she didn't recognize. As her gaze settled on the surroundings, she realized it was a hospital room. Turning her head, she spotted Ethan lying beside her, his face serene and unguarded in sleep,

The soft rays of sunlight filtered through the window, casting a golden glow on his features. It accentuated his already striking face, making him look even more handsome than usual. Her eyes lingered on him, drawn to her favorite feature-his captivating eyes. Though closed now, she knew how easily they could draw someone in, mysterious yet magnetic, framed by long, dark lashes that stood out like a masterpiece.

Shifting slightly, she propped herself up on one elbow and leaned closer to place a gentle kiss on his cheek. But just as her lips brushed against him, Ethan turned his face, causing her kiss to land squarely on his lips.

Startled, Lily pulled back instinctively, but before she could retreat, his arm snaked around her waist, pulling her closer. His lips captured hers in a deep, lingering kiss. She froze for a moment, worried about his injuries, but her resolve faltered as the intensity of the kiss grew. Against her better judgment, she melted into it, her senses overwhelmed.

Just as she began to lose herself, Ethan's hand drifted lower, resting on her back before giving it a playful squeeze. The unexpected gesture caused her to gasp, her surprise nearly leading her to bite his lip.

"Ethan!" she hissed, pulling away abruptly. Her cheeks burned a fiery red as she glared at him. "We're in a hospital! Behave yourself!"

Her scolding didn't faze him. Instead, he grinned like a mischievous child caught stealing candy. "But you kissed me first," he countered, feigning innocence.

"That was an accident!" she shot back, crossing her arms.

"How was I supposed to know that?" he teased, wiggling his eyebrows. "For all I knew, you wanted some morning fun. You know, if you ever have such requests, feel free to tell me. I'd be happy to fulfill every single one."

Lily's jaw dropped as her face turned even redder. "You're shameless!" she snapped, placing a hand over his mouth to stop him from saying anything more.

"For you, always," he murmured with a wink, his muffled voice oozing playful charm.

Huffing, Lily pushed herself off the bed, eager to distance herself from his shameless antics. As she straightened her clothes, her eyes landed on a bouquet of flowers sitting on the bedside table.

"Ethan, look! Someone sent you flowers," she said with a smile, walking over to pick them up.

Ethan's eyes narrowed at the sight of the bouquet. His mind raced. The news of his accident had been kept private, so who could have sent these?

"They're beautiful," Lily remarked, holding the bouquet up to her nose to inhale the fragrance. As she turned it slightly, she noticed a small card tucked inside. "Oh, there's a note!" she exclaimed

eaching for it.

Before she could open the letter, Ethan interjected smoothly, "Lily, could you get me a glass of water?"

She hesitated for a moment but then nodded, handing him the note absentmindedly as she moved to pour water from the jug on the table. Ethan quickly unfolded the note and scanned its contents, his jaw tightening as he read. His expression darkened, the atmosphere in the room shifting subtly.

Wed, 12

+8 Pearls

Not wanting to alarm Lily, he folded the letter and slid it out of sight just as she turned back with the glass of water. "Here you go," she said, handing it to him. "Thank you," he replied, his voice calm but edged with something unspoken. "Who was it from?" she asked curiously, gesturing toward the bouquet. Ethan hesitated

for a split second before responding with a nonchalant tone, "Probably a client or business associate. Nothing important."

Lily studied his face for a moment, sensing that something wasn't quite right, but she chose not to press further. Instead, she placed the bouquet back on the table and gave him a small smile.

Ethan, however, was far from calm. As he sipped the water, his mind replayed the words of the letter. It wasn't a gesture of goodwill-it was a warning. Someone out there was watching, and they wanted him to

know it.

After taking a sip of water, Ethan met Lily's questioning gaze and gave a casual shrug. "Oh, it's from Assistant Ben. He wanted to wish us a good morning and a speedy recovery."

Lily's frown deepened as she processed his explanation. If Assistant Ben wanted to send wishes, why would he include a letter instead of just saying it? It didn't sit right with her, and she was about to press him further when a knock at the door interrupted her train of thought.

The doctor entered, clipboard in hand, and began examining Ethan. Grateful for the timely distraction, Ethan inwardly sighed with relief, knowing Lily's sharp intuition might have led to uncomfortable questions.

The doctor reported that Ethan's test results looked good and confirmed he could be discharged the next day. The news lifted their spirits, and a genuine smile spread across both their faces.

Not long after, Parker, James, and Mia arrived, bringing with them a mix of cheer and necessities for Lily and Ethan. Mia handed over a bag filled with essentials, her voice laced with encouragement for Lily.

Despite her reluctance, Lily had to leave for a shoot scheduled for the day. She didn't want to leave Ethan's side, especially given everything that had happened. However, with Ethan and the others urging her to go, she eventually relented.

"I'll be back soon," she assured him, holding his hand before walking out with Mia.

As the door closed behind them, Ethan's soft, loving expression hardened, transforming into one of icy fury. His fingers curled into fists, and the room's atmosphere grew tense.

"What's going on, Ethan?" Parker asked, noting the shift in his demeanor.

Wordlessly, Ethan reached for the letter and flung it onto the table. "This," he said coldly, his voice laced with contempt.

Parker picked up the letter, unfolding it carefully as James leaned in to read over his shoulder. The note sent a chill down their spines as Parker read it aloud:

My dear injured enemy,

1. r. The contents

I trust this message finds you well-or at least well enough for me to knock you down again. I'm sure your mind is racing with questions: Who am I? What do I want? Why am I doing this?

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Wed, 12

86%

+8 Pearls

Let me offer you some clarity: I am your worst nightmare. But who I am isn't as important as what I can do. You're the renowned Ethan, aren't you? The devil king of the business world, one of the most influential names among the prestigious families. Surely someone of your caliber can figure it out, right?

Here's a challenge: find me-if you can-before I strike again. Oh, but let's be honest, you can't.

Take care of yourself. I'd hate for you to miss what's coming next.

Sincerely,

Your Death Wisher

XYZ

The letter's mocking tone ignited a fire in Ethan's eyes. He slammed his palm against the bedside table, his jaw clenched tightly.

"This person has no fear," James murmured, his voice tinged with disbelief. "They've directly taunted you, Ethan. This isn't just some random threat. They're deliberately playing with you."

"They're inviting me to hunt them," Ethan said, his voice cold and deliberate. "And they think I won't be able to catch them."

"Do you think they're serious about striking again?" Parker asked, though the answer already felt obvious.

Ethan nodded grimly. "Whoever this is, they're calculated. They knew about the accident, sent a bouquet to taunt me, and included a letter daring me to act. This isn't over."

"What's the plan?" James asked, his tone serious.

Ethan's gaze shifted toward the window as he spoke, his voice resolute. "We double security-everywhere. Around me, around Lily, and every member of my family. We'll review every detail of the accident, analyze the footage, and investigate every lead, no matter how insignificant it seems. Assistant Ben will coordinate with the team to tighten our defenses. Whoever this 'Death Wisher' is, they won't catch us off guard again."

The room fell silent, the gravity of the situation hanging heavy in the air. It was clear that this wasn't just a game to Ethan-it was personal. The enemy had crossed a line, and Ethan would stop at nothing to ensure his loved ones were safe and that the person behind this would pay.

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Rebirth After Being Betrayed by My Husband (Lily and Ryan)

86%¹

+8 Pearls

Parker burst into laughter, waving the letter theatrically. "Seriously? What is this nonsense?" he said between chuckles. "Who writes such a long-winded letter to threaten someone? It's like they're auditioning for a dramatic villain role!"

James joined in, laughing even harder. "Ethan, this isn't a threat letter; this is your psycho enemy's love letter!" He snatched the letter from Parker, dramatically tossed it onto Ethan's lap, and leaned back, still chuckling,

Ethan shot them a sharp glance, shaking his head in disapproval. "Enough of this nonsense. Be serious for once!" he said firmly, though a faint smile tugged at his lips.

James wiped his eyes and grinned. "Alright, alright. But honestly, it does remind me of college. Back then, you were the guy who always got the most love letters. Looks like nothing's changed."

"Exactly!" Parker added with a smirk. "Your charm is still attracting all kinds of admirers, even the dangerous, psychotic ones."

Ethan sighed, his glare intensifying. "Guys..." he said, his tone laced with a warning.

Realizing they'd pushed their luck, both James and Parker stopped laughing immediately, straightening up as though caught by a stern teacher.

"Good," Ethan said with a nod, his expression softening slightly. Then, as if a thought crossed his mind, he asked, "Are the hidden guards stationed near Lily?"

James nodded confidently. "Yes, they're in place. She's safe."

Ethan relaxed a fraction but still looked pensive. "What about tracing this person?" he asked.

James sighed, his expression turning grim. "I've tried everything, Ethan. Just like you said, this person is meticulous. They covered their tracks so well, I couldn't find a single lead."

"What?" Parker exclaimed in disbelief. "Even you couldn't trace them? You're one of the best at this sort of thing!"

James's somber nod spoke volumes. "Whoever they are, they're not just anyone. They know what they're doing, and they've done it flawlessly."

The room fell silent for a moment as the weight of James's words sank in.

Parker broke the silence. "So, what now? What's the next move?"

Ethan's eyes hardened with determination. "We search again," he said firmly. "No matter how long it takes or how deeply they've hidden themselves, we'll find them. We have to stop them before they make another move."

The seriousness in Ethan's tone left no room for argument. Everyone nodded in agreement understanding the urgency of the situation. This wasn't just a threat anymore-it was a challenge.

Ethan clenched the letter in his hand, his gaze fixed on the view outside the window. His mind churned with thoughts of strategy and resolve. Whoever this enemy is, they've made a grave mistake by underestimating me. In this game, I'll make sure I'm the hunter, not the prey.

Meanwhile at the Ralwin Mansion

11:18 Wed, 12 Mar

43 Pearls

In a sleek, black car speeding toward the Baldwin estate, Beatrice and Arthur sat quietly, deep in thought. Their destination was one of the other three prestigious family homes-the Baldwin Mansion.

The Baldwins were more than just powerful allies; they were close friends. Charles and Jacky, the heads of the Baldwin family, had a bond with the Collins that spanned decades. The men had been inseparable since childhood, while their wives had formed their own unbreakable friendship during their college days.

The Baldwin Family was as accomplished as the Collins. Baldwin Charles, a renowned businessman, had successfully passed the reins of his empire to his eldest son, who now served as CEO of Baldwin Corporation. The second son, had chosen a different path, following in the footsteps of his grandfather, and making a name for himself in the military.

As the car approached the grand gates of the Baldwin Mansion, Beatrice glanced at her husband. "Do you think they'll have any insight into this situation?" she asked softly.

Author nodded. "If anyone can help us piece this puzzle together, it's Charlse. The Baldwins have resources and networks that might reveal what we've missed."

With that, the car rolled to a stop, and the two stepped out, ready to face the next step in uncovering the mystery surrounding the looming threat to their family.

Jeff, the youngest son of the Baldwin Family, is a well-known actor, following in the footsteps of his mother, Jacky, who was a celebrated actress before stepping away from the industry to focus on raising her children.

Interestingly, Jeff is a twin. He has a younger sister who, unlike him, remains largely unknown to the public. Very little information about her has ever been revealed, and no one seems to have seen her in recent years. Rumor has it that she now lives in Canada with her grandfather, Lin senior.

Years ago, when the Baldwin Couple and the Collins couple got married, they made a mutual promise: their children would one day marry each other, uniting the two families even further. Based on this agreement, Ethan was supposed to marry the youngest daughter of the Baldwin Family.

However, circumstances had changed. Ethan was now married to Lily, and the Collins Family needed to inform the Baldwins about breaking the long-standing marriage pact. They were anxious about how the Baldwins would take the news. When the Collinss arrived at the Baldwin Mansion, their car smoothly passed through the grand gates into the sprawling estate. The luxurious villa was an imposing sight, reflecting the Baldwin's wealth and prestige. The couple was warmly received by the housekeeper, who guided them into the mansion.

Inside the elegant hall, Charlse and Jacky were waiting for their guests. It had been a long time since the two families had met, so after exchanging pleasantries and catching up briefly, everyone settled down on the plush couches. The maids served tea and refreshments, adding to the formal yet warm atmosphere.

"Author, Beatrice, what a surprise to see you here!" Charlse said, his voice carrying both curiosity and concern. "I thought you'd be enjoying your vacation for a few more days."

Author sighed softly before responding, "Well, our son Ethan had a minor accident, so we had to cut the trip short."

"An accident? Is Ethan alright?" Jacky asked, her expression immediately turning to worry.

"He's fine now, thank you for asking," Authur reassured her. "By the way, where is everyone?" Beatrice chimed in, glancing around the expansive hall.

Jacky let out a small sigh. "The eldest two are at work as usual, and Jeff is upstairs, probably still asleep."

"And what about her?" Beatrice asked cautiously. "Is she still in Canada with Grandpa?"

+ Pearls

The Baldwin Couple exchanged a quick, meaningful glance before nodding. For a brief moment, Beatrice thought she caught a flicker of sadness in Jacky's eyes, but it disappeared as quickly as it came.

"She's doing well," Jacky replied with a faint smile, keeping her tone light.

After a brief pause, Beatrice cleared her throat, visibly nervous. "Jacky, Charlse, we came here today because we need to tell you something important," she began hesitantly. "I know we had an agreement-our children were to marry each other-but... things have changed." She looked at her husband for support before continuing.

"Ethan is already married," Authur added gently, his tone heavy with the weight of their words.

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Rebirth After Being Betrayed by My Husband (Lily and Ryan)

Rebirth After Being Betrayed by My Husband

86%

+8 Pearls

"What? He's married?" Jacky exclaimed, her voice laced with shock. "When did this happen?"

Authur hesitated, his tone apologetic. "It's already been a month. I'm truly sorry, Qian, Brother Charlse. I know we had agreed to unite our families through this marriage, but Ethan fell in love with Lily, and he married her."

Jacky blinked, clearly stunned. "What did you say? What's her name again?" she asked, her voice barely above a whisper.

"Lily," Beatrice repeated, glancing at Jacky with slight confusion.

"Lily..." Jacky murmured, her mind seeming to drift elsewhere. Charlse noticed her dazed expression and gently squeezed her hand, bringing her back to reality. She quickly snapped out of her thoughts, her cheeks flushed with embarrassment. "I'm sorry... I didn't mean to space out," she apologized hurriedly.

Authur, looking regretful, tried to ease the tension. "Charlse, Jacky, I deeply regret that this promise between our families has been broken. But what could we do? Love is unpredictable. I hope you're not angry with us."

Baldwin Charlse sighed deeply but managed a nod. "I understand. Fate has its own plans, after all. Besides..." He paused mid-sentence as if stopping himself from saying too much. "Anyway, I wish Ethan and Lily all the happiness in their married life."

Hearing his words, Authur and Beatrice sighed in relief. They had been anxious about the Baldwins reaction, fearing anger or disappointment. But now, seeing their friends handle the news so gracefully, they felt reassured. Smiling, the two couples enjoyed a peaceful lunch together before the Collins finally departed.

As soon as the guests left, Jacky turned to her husband, her expression tinged with worry. "Charlse, do you think she-"

"Jacky," Charlse interrupted firmly, cutting her off before she could finish. He looked at her with a mix of tenderness and exhaustion. "Please, don't start again. We've been down this road so many times, and it only ends in disappointment."

"But..."

"If it's meant to happen, our daughter will return to us someday," he said with a heavy sigh, though his voice held a note of hope. Taking her hand, he led her to the couch. "Come, sit down. Jeff will be here any moment now, and you know he doesn't like seeing us looking so gloomy."

Jacky tried to muster a smile, nodding in agreement. Just as she composed herself, the sound of footsteps on the stairs caught their attention. Jeff, their youngest son, strolled down in his quirky Pokémon-themed pajamas, clutching a small teddy bear.

"Yo! Good morning, Mom and Dad!" he greeted cheerfully. However, his bright smile faded as he took in their expressions. Even though they were trying to act normal, Jeff wasn't fooled. As an actor, he had a sharp eye for emotions and could tell instantly that their smiles were forced.

"What's going on? Why do you both look so sad?" he asked, his tone half-joking to lighten the mood. "Wait... is it because my big brother's finally getting married?"

Baldwin Charlse raised an eyebrow at his son. "Jeff, first of all, it's afternoon, not morning. Secondly, what

does your brother's marriage have to do with us looking sad?"

+8 Pearls

Jeff plopped onto the couch dramatically, grinning mischievously. "Dad, it has everything to do with it! Marriage equals compromises, compromises equal obeying your wife's every order, obeying your wife means turning into her personal servant, and that leads to fights and stress. Ultimately, you end up depressed!"

Baldwin Charlse chuckled despite himself. "Really, Mr. Einstein? And how exactly does all of this connect to your mother and me?"

"Simple," Jeff replied with exaggerated confidence. "If my elder brother becomes miserable after marriage, you two will feel miserable as well because, obviously, you love him. Therefore, my brothers and I have come to a unanimous decision: we're never getting married!"

Baldwin Charlse's lips twitched in irritation as he turned his stern gaze toward his youngest son. "What nonsense are you spouting? Marriage is one of the best things that can happen to a person! Have you ever seen your mother and me fighting?"

Jeff, unfazed by his father's tone, muttered under his breath, "That's probably because you're a complete wife slave..."

Unfortunately for him, his mother, Jacky, caught the comment and burst into laughter.

"What did you just say?" Charlse asked, narrowing his eyes. The mischievous glint in his wife's eyes and his son's sheepish smile told him he hadn't imagined it.

"Hehe... nothing, Dad," Jeff replied, flashing an innocent grin. Trying to change the subject, he asked, "By the way, who was that at the door earlier?"

"Oh, that was your Uncle Authur and Aunt Beatrice," Jacky replied. But her smile quickly turned into a frown as she took in her son's attire. "Jeff, seriously, what are you wearing? You're not a five-year-old anymore; you're 23! Act your age! Just look at your elder brothers-they're always so well-dressed. And then there's you..."

"Mom!" Jeff whined dramatically as he plopped down on the couch next to her, making a big show of pouting. "Why is Dad scolding me again? And what's wrong with my outfit? This is fashion! You just don't get it."

He turned to his mother, making an exaggerated puppy face and pretending to sob. "Mom..."

Baldwin Charlse groaned, rubbing his temples in frustration. He knew from experience that this was a losing battle. Jacky doted on their youngest son to the point of spoiling him completely. As expected, she turned to her husband with a soft look and scolded him instead.

"Charlse, why are you always picking on him? Leave the poor boy alone!"

"Jacky," Charlse sighed, his exasperation evident, "this is entirely your fault. You've spoiled him so much that he doesn't even listen to me anymore. He's 23 years old, and just look at him! What is he holding in his hand? A teddy bear, for goodness' sake!"

Before Jacky could respond, Jeff gasped dramatically, clutching the teddy bear to his chest. "Dad! You can scold me all you want, but leave Mr. Fluffy out of this! Look at him-he's adorable. How can you be so heartless?"

He turned his attention to the teddy bear, patting its head gently. "Mr. Fluffy, don't take Dad's words to heart, okay? He's just old and grumpy. He doesn't understand you like I do."

Watching his son's antics, Charlse looked at his wife with a deadpan expression. "Are you absolutely sure

this boy is our son?"

Jacky snorted in amusement. "What do you think?"

+8 Pearls

Shaking his head, Charlse muttered, "With behavior like this, I honestly have no idea where he got those ridiculous genes from."

Completely ignoring their exchange, Jeff looked back at his mother, his curiosity piqued. "So, why did Uncle Authur and Aunt Beatrice come by?"

"They came to let us know that Ethan got married," Jacky replied casually.

Jeff blinked, her words barely registering. "Oh, so that stone-faced, emotionless guy actually got married. Good for him." He leaned back, seemingly indifferent,

but then froze mid-motion. His eyes widened in disbelief as the words finally sank in. "Wait... what? Mom, what did you just say?"

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Rebirth After Being Betrayed by My Husband

86%

+8 Pearls

"Ethan got married..." Jacky said softly, her voice trailing off as if she were still processing the news herself.

Jeff stared at his parents in disbelief. To confirm he wasn't dreaming, he pinched himself and then gasped dramatically. "Mom, wait. Are you saying Ethan got married? Uncle Authur and Aunt Beatrice's son?"

Jacky nodded, her expression calm. "Yes, that's right."

For a moment, Jeff was speechless, but then he burst out laughing, clutching his stomach as he bent over. "Oh my God! This... this is priceless! I can't believe it. Ethan is actually married. This is the best day of my life!" His laughter grew so intense that tears started rolling down his cheeks, leaving his parents watching him with puzzled expressions.

"Jacky, what's wrong with him? Why is he laughing like that?" Charlse asked his wife, clearly baffled by his son's reaction.

Jacky shrugged helplessly. "I have no idea." Turning to Jeff, she gently asked, "Jeff, dear, why are you laughing so much? What's so funny?"

Trying to catch his breath, Jeff wiped the tears from his eyes. "I just can't believe it. Ethan got married. What a relief!" He paused, shaking his head with mock pity. "But, honestly, I do feel bad..."

His father, mistaking his sentiment, sighed and nodded. "I understand, son. It was decided long ago that your twin sister would marry Ethan, but I suppose fate had other plans. It's disappointing, I know. He would have been such a perfect match for our little princess..."

"Perfect match? Hah!" Jeff scoffed, rolling his eyes. "Dad, that would've been the ultimate disaster. Seriously, what's so great about that guy?"

Charlse frowned, confused. "If that's not why you're sad, then what are you feeling bad about?"

Jeff leaned back on the couch, his expression exaggeratedly serious. "Dad, I feel bad for the poor girl who married Ethan. Imagine living your life with that block of wood! Honestly, I'd rather be stranded in Antarctica than share a house with him."

"Jeff!" Jacky scolded, glaring at her son. "Don't talk about Ethan like that. He's such an exceptional young man! He would've been a wonderful husband for your sister."

"Your mother's right," Charlse chimed in, nodding in agreement. "Ethan is not only a handsome man, but he's also intelligent and capable. A rare combination these days."

"Really, Dad? Handsome and intelligent?" Jeff snickered, raising an eyebrow. "You forgot a few things. Let me add to his glowing résumé: emotionless, cold-faced, block of ice, cruel, and as lively as a piece of wood."

"Jeff!" Jacky glared at him again, but he was just getting started.

Grinning mischievously, Jeff continued, "Seriously, imagine living with him. He doesn't smile, doesn't laugh at your jokes, and doesn't let anyone get close to him. Talking to him feels like chatting with a wall. He looks at people like he's considering how best to dispose of their bodies. And don't even get me ed on how heartless he can be."

Charlse raised an eyebrow at his son's theatrical performance but couldn't suppress the small twitch at the corner of his lips. "You've got quite the imagination, don't you?"

leff chrummed "I'm inet heing honest. Whoever married him is either incredibly hrave or comnletelv

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clueless."

+8 Pearls

"And when she finally returns to live with us, no one will ever take her away again, Jacky said, her voice resolute but tinged with emotion.

"Mom, Dad, I'm saying this right now-my little sister is going to stay with us forever," Jeff declared firmly, hugging his beloved Mr. Fluffy closer to his chest. "She's never going to get married to anyone. I won't allow it."

Baldwin Charlse sighed deeply, his expression conflicted as he squeezed his wife's hand gently. "In a way, maybe Ethan getting married is a blessing," he said softly. "After all, we don't even know if our little princess

"Dad! Don't say things like that!" Jeff interrupted sharply, standing abruptly from the couch. His sudden outburst startled both his parents. "She's out there somewhere, okay? I know it. She's going to come back to us. She will!"

Without waiting for a response, Jeff stormed off toward his room, clutching Mr. Fluffy tightly. Jacky and Charlse could only watch him go, their hearts heavy with the same longing that never seemed to fade.

"Charlse," Jacky whispered, her voice breaking, "I truly hope Jeff is right. I pray every day that his words come true. It's my fault... It's my fault our daughter is suffering, far away from us."

Baldwin Charlse pulled his wife into a gentle embrace, wiping away the tears that streamed down her face. He pressed a tender kiss to her forehead, his own voice trembling with emotion. "Jacky,

it's not your fault," Charlse reassured her softly. "If anyone is to blame, it's me. I failed her as a father. I failed to protect her. If only I had realized what he was planning... if only we had acted sooner, we could have stopped this tragedy."

His words hung heavy in the air as his gaze grew distant. Tears welled up in his eyes, but he blinked them away, refusing to break down. He knew Jacky needed his strength now, even though his own heart ached with guilt and longing. Every day, he replayed the events in his mind, haunted by the choices he hadn't made and the clues he had missed. What good were wealth and power if he couldn't protect the most precious part of his life-his own daughter?

"I just want her to be safe, Jacky," Charlse said after a long pause, his voice barely above a whisper. "Wherever she is, I hope she's okay. That's all I can pray for."

The couple sat together in silence, holding each other tightly as they remembered their daughter and the cruel twists of fate that had torn their family apart.

A Week Later

Time moved slowly in the Baldwin household, but the days carried on. Over the past week, not much had changed. Ethan had been discharged from the hospital, with the doctors advising that it would take at least another week for his injured hand to heal completely.

Meanwhile, Lily had been a constant source of care and support for her husband. She devoted herself to ensuring all his needs were met, much to Ethan's delight. Though injured, he seemed to relish the extra attention from his wife, which brought a quiet sense of warmth to their home.

However, Lily's week was far from easy. Between taking care of Ethan, her demanding shooting schedule, and overseeing progress at her studio, her days were packed from morning until night. On top of it all, she had another plan in motion-a deeply personal one.

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Her heart fluttered every time she thought about it. She wanted to confess her feelings to Ethan, to let him know just how much he truly meant to her. But she decided to wait. Once his hand had healed and he was feeling better, she would make her move.

For now, she threw herself into her responsibilities, balancing her roles as a wife, actress, and entrepreneur with unwavering determination. Little did anyone know that the week ahead would bring changes none of them could foresee.