

Five Years of Marriage to Mr. Bradford

Novel

Chapter 32

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Chapter 32 +25 Bonus "Dad , can you have a little shame ? " Rebecca snapped , unable to fathom her family's sudden extravagance . They'd always been an ordinary household . How could they afford , or even dream of , six figures ? Their savings over the years barely scraped that amount . Soren exploded in rage . " Mind your language , you ungrateful brat ! " " Yeah ! I'm ungrateful ! No one's taught me how to shamelessly beg for stuff ! " she shot back . Soren raised his hand to strike her , but Vance swiftly stepped between them , pulling her into a protective embrace .

The blow landed squarely on his body instead . " You little punk , ruining my good mood ! I'll beat the crap out of you ! " Soren spluttered . Vance turned , shielding her as he faced Soren . The latter deflated , forcing a smile . " Rebecca's got no manners . Don't mind her . " " She's been moody lately , " Vance said smoothly . " Cut her some slack . " Soren caught the unspoken warning against hitting Rebecca . Gazing up at the man towering protectively over her , Rebecca felt a surge of bittersweet sorrow . He was defending her now , but what good was it ?

She no longer cared about her family's cruelty . Where had this protectiveness been when she needed it the most ? Vance had always been skilled at drawing boundaries based on his loyalties . He wouldn't let Soren hit her , but if the conflict involved his friends or Catherine , it would be a different story . Sensing the tension, Adeline hurried over to defuse it , her smile apologetic . " Come on , everyone , take a seat . I just made some tea . Soren , show some hospitality . " Soren seized the excuse to back down , and Adeline served Vance a cup . " What's bothering Rebecca ?

" Vance settled into a chair , his arm draping casually over Rebecca's shoulder as he glanced her way . " Probably mad at me . Or tired of me ? I'm not sure . Maybe she met someone better out there ? " " No way ! " Adeline dismissed the idea instantly . " How could she find anyone better ? Her condition only scares people away . " Rebecca's heart plummeted , though she wasn't surprised . It was the unspoken consensus , even from her own family , that besides Vance , no one would want a cripple like her .

Still tinkering with his new fishing gear , Soren chimed in roughly , " With a great guy like Vance , what more do you want ? If you dare cheat on him , I'll break your other leg ! " " Break them now ! " Rebecca surged to her feet , but Vance gently held her back . " That's enough . " Turning to Soren , he suggested smoothly , " Wanna try out the new rod ? " Soren's face lit up . " Sure thing ! " Vance leaned down , his voice softening as he stroked

her hair . " I'll go fishing with Soren . You stay and chat with your mom . " Come on , let's go , " Soren urged .

Vance got up and left with him . The moment the door clicked shut , Adeline plopped down beside her and launched into a scolding . " Are you out of your mind ? Vance is such a catch , and instead of treating him right , you're picking fights ? Other women would kill to be with a man like him . You hit the jackpot , and you don't even appreciate it . If he leaves , good luck finding another rich husband . " Chapter 32 +25 Bonus Rebecca sneered , " You mean , good luck finding another sucker as your son - in - law . " Adeline's expression soured . " You really don't know what's good for you .

Let me be clear : If you chase him off , don't bother coming back . You're useless ; can't even keep a man happy . " Little did she know that Rebecca was planning to divorce Vance . BIG SALE : 3500 bonus free fou you

Chapter 33

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Chapter 33 Of course , Rebecca couldn't voice that out aloud , or her parents would flip out , making her escape from this life even harder . Adeline shifted to her familiar lecture mode . " You've been married five years now . It's time to have a kid with him and lock himn down . If you don't , plenty of other women will gladly step in . Why are you so clueless ? I'm warning you : if you're not pregnant by year's end , don't ever come back . " She continued relentlessly . " You're disabled , so we can't rely on you for our retirement . The only thing you're good for is clinging to Vance .

Even if you don't think of yourself , think of us . What about your dad and me in our old age ? What about your brother ? " The nagging grated on Rebecca's nerves . Every time her family squeezed Vance for more , she felt like vanishing into thin air . Their greed trampled her dignity and shredded her self - respect in the marriage . Vance's lavish generosity only fueled their demands , but only she knew how deeply he despised their pettiness deep down . Yet they deluded themselves into thinking he genuinely liked them . Rebecca couldn't endure it any longer . " Enough !

If you keep hounding Vance for stuff or money , I'll just divorce him ! " Undaunted , Adeline scoffed , " You ? Divorce him ? Planning to beg on the streets ? How would you survive without him ? Got some guy on the side ? What could they possibly want - your limp ? Your uselessness ? Or your age ? " That was her mother and the toxic atmosphere of this house . No wonder she dreaded every visit ; each one was pure torment . " Fine ! Then I'm out ! I'll go beg right now ! " She stood up and stormed toward the door . " With that limp , how far will you get ? " Adeline sneered .

" Don't embarrass yourself and us . When he gets back and asks , should I tell him you went out hustling ? " Rebecca froze at the door , her back to Adeline . She bit her lip until

it bled , desperately holding back her tears . Hustling . That was likely Adeline's highest aspiration for her , in whatever form it took . As a child , when Rebecca wanted dance lessons , Adeline had snapped , " Why learn dance like some floozy out to sell herself ?

" Later , swayed by who - knows - what , she'd conceded and begun to believe that dance built poise , making girls more marketable to rich men for better prices . In a cruel twist , Rebecca had fulfilled that vision , selling herself dearly , at the cost of her leg . Every minute in this house suffocated her , yet she couldn't leave . If she did , her parents might unleash even wilder demands on Vance . Seeing her rooted in place , Adeline snorted triumphantly . " Thought you were tougher than that .

" Vance and Soren returned from fishing as evening fell , joined by her brother , Emmett Perry , who had hurried home for dinner . Soren burst in , loudly praising Vance's luck . Vance had reeled in a bounty , while Soren caught nothing . Adeline swiftly joined the flattery chorus . Rebecca was accustomed to their sycophantic displays , but they still turned her stomach . Adeline summoned everyone to the table , and Soren uncorked a bottle of whiskey , proclaiming loudly , " Thanks to Vance , I get to taste this . I'd never afford it .

" Vance responded with good - natured patience , but Rebecca squirmed in her seat . Emmett exchanged sly glances with Adeline , followed by a nudge , Rebecca caught it , knowing they were up to no good . Ruby

Chapter 34

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" Here , have a drumstick ." Adeline eagerly served Vance with tongs . " No , no , give it to Soren . It's his special day , " Vance replied , shifting his plate aside . Rebecca snorted inwardly , knowing the real reason . Vance disliked their bland cooking ; he craved spice but detested grease . That pallid chicken , slick with oil , hit every aversion . Yet Adeline's zeal was unstoppable . She piled his plate high with food . 1 Watching Vance's concealed discomfort , Rebecca felt a flicker of schadenfreude .

In the past , she'd discreetly transfer portions to her plate to spare him , but not today . He'd have to deal with it himself . He cast pleading glances her way , but she feigned ignorance . Resigned , he nibbled slowly , struggling with each bite . Adeline turned to her . " Becky ... " Here it came again . The affectionate appellation always signaled a favor aimed at Vance , but routed through Rebecca . Adeline was cunning in that aspect , complaining to Rebecca and guilt - trapping Vance . That was Rebecca's role here - a mere conduit . " Becky , " Adeline beamed , her eyes crinkling .

" We've got good news at home ! " Rebecca offered no response . Their " good news " never included her , unless it involved extracting money . Undeterred by the silence , Adeline plowed on . " Emmett has got a girlfriend . " Rebecca remained mute , but Vance

chimed in politely , " That's great . Congrats . " Rebecca sneered inwardly . " Congrats ? How much is that worth in cash ? " " Yeah , we're thrilled . It's just ... " Adeline lit up , then sighed . " Her family's demands are so high . They insist on a new house before marriage . " " A new house ? " Rebecca frowned .

" Isn't this one already bought for Emmett's wedding ? " Years ago , they had guilted Vance into funding it under the same pretext . Adeline winced dramatically . " Girls these days are so picky . She won't accept a lived - in place ; it has to be brand new , with her name on the deed . " " So ? What's that got to do with me ? " Rebecca interrupted . " I don't have money - not a dime . " Vance tried to speak , but she stomped on his foot under the table . With pretense dropped , Adeline turned pleading eyes to him . " We're out of options . Consider it a loan . We'll pay it back .

" 1/2 Chapter 34 +25 Bonus " With what ? " Rebecca cut in again . " Got another daughter to sell off ? Or should I break my other leg ? " Fueled by the whiskey , Soren slammed his fist on the table , rattling the dishes . Undaunted , Rebecca set down her knife and fork . " No need to bang the table - just hit me . Kill me and end everyone's misery . " " How dare you talk back ? I'll beat you senseless today , you ungrateful wretch ! " Soren seized a plate , ready to hurl it . Adeline restrained him desperately . " Stop it ! For Vance's sake , calm down . " Rebecca almost laughed .

For Vance's sake ? As if he truly valued them . Vance wrapped an arm around her shoulder , his tone soothing . " Let's look at houses first . Once you find one ... " " No ' once ' about it ! " Rebecca shrugged him off and stood abruptly , glaring at her family . " You want to get married , right ? " Emmett nodded cautiously . Comments Support Share +2 Ruby Walker

Chapter 35

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Chapter 35 " You need a house , right ? " Rebecca asked again . Adeline blinked , then nodded , puzzled by her intent . " There's a way , " Rebecca scoffed . " What ? " Emmett and Adeline asked in unison , their eyes alight with greedy anticipation . Grabbing her bag , Rebecca declared sarcastically , " I'll divorce Vance , and your girlfriend can marry him instead . Not to mention a house , she gets everything he owns . Cut out the middleman . " The trio sat stunned , jaws slack , but Vance burst into laughter , which caught Rebecca off guard .

She'd expected offense , but glancing down , she saw amusement lingering on his face . Regardless , dinner was ruined . She turned and strode out , her family too dazed to stop her . She jabbed the elevator button , uncaring how Vance would handle the fallout . As the doors opened , he emerged from the apartment , joining her inside . They descended in tense silence until he pressed B1 . " What was that today ? Why so fired up ? " Rebecca

drew a deep breath . " Vance , I gotta ask you something . " He paused . " Go ahead . " " In your mind , how much is my leg worth ?

" she asked , pointing at her injured leg . He faltered . " Why ask that ? " Her eyes burned with unshed tears , her heart aching fiercely . " I need to know . How much more are you planning to pay for this leg ? " Met with his silence , she persisted . " I know you don't like them , and I understand why you indulge their every whim . It's all because of this leg . Does it have a price limit in your head ? How long will you keep compensating for it ? " " Rebecca ... " he began , but the elevator doors slid open .

The waiting person hesitated at the sight of Rebecca's reddened eyes and Vance's imposing stance . Vance nodded politely , then gripped her shoulders , turning her toward him to shield her tears from view . The conversation halted . They reached the underground lot , Vance's hold tightening unconsciously until she was pressed firmly against him . The doors opened , and the stranger exited hastily . The scent of Vance's shirt assailed her nostrils . She shoved him away and stepped out , with him staring 1/2 Chapter 35 +25 Bonus and following .

In the car , he started the engine but didn't drive off immediately . After a heavy pause , he spoke . " As I said , just be a good wife . Don't stress over these trivial things . They mean nothing to me . " " Yeah , " she choked out , her voice thick with emotion . " To you , money is insignificant . Houses and cars are mere drops in the ocean to you . But to me , it feels like I sold you this leg , and you're forever paying installments . Five years is enough . Let's end this , okay ? Debt is cleared , and we go our separate ways . " He said nothing , simply driving off .

A melancholic song filled the silence : " I heard you married on a lonely night . No smile upon your face in sight . I never dared to ask or see . What if the blame belongs to me ? Back then , I was too young , too wild . Careless words , a reckless child . I hurt you deeply . I made you bleed . Some wounds cut far beyond what we need . A heart so kind - how does it live on through ? What can a lifetime ever do ? So let me say I'm sorry now . With guilt I carry , I don't know how . One careless touch , one foolish play . Can ruin someone's whole lifetime away ...

" Each lyric pierced her heart , the pain swelling like a relentless tide , threatening to drown her . She covered her face , tears streaming through her fingers . " Why play this song ? Can't we stop torturing each other ? " BIG SALE : 3500 bonus free fou you
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Chapter 36

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Chapter 36 Vance's phone rang , cutting off the music . The caller ID flashed : Cathy Babe . Rebecca's tears halted as she registered the name . He disconnected the Bluetooth and

pulled over to answer . She couldn't make out Catherine's words , but his expression grew increasingly grave . " I'll be right there , " he said , hanging up and turning to her . " I'll take you home first . Cathy's sick ; I need to check on her . " Accustomed to this kind of thing , she flung open the car door . " Don't bother . I'll manage myself . " " Rebecca ...

" he called after her , but his voice was cut off by the slammed door . He didn't pursue , instead reversing the car and speeding away without a moment's hesitation . Watching the taillights fade , Rebecca felt a profound numbness envelop her , as if razor - sharp claws had ravaged her heart , leaving it mangled and devoid of sensation . She was about to hail a cab when her phone rang . It was a delivery service . " Hi , two boxes of fruit arrived . You home ? " Fruit ? She hadn't ordered any . " Where's it from ? " " Local - grapes . The sender's last name is Perry .

" She figured it must be from her grandma , Josette Perry . Josette lived alone in the countryside , tending grapes in her yard , and sent her thoughtful shipments . Rebecca stood on the dimming street , the sky graying overhead . A sudden , overwhelming longing washed over her . " Someone's home - deliver it there , " she instructed . " Tell them to refrigerate it . " She couldn't wait another moment . Hailing a cab , she headed straight to Josette's place . If anyone in the world truly loved her unconditionally , it was Josette .

A retired teacher , Josette had returned to her rural hometown, cherishing her old house amid blooming flowers and homegrown produce . Rebecca yearned to repay and care for her , but despite repeated invitations to live in the city or even offers to buy her a separate home , Josette always declined , citing her attachment to her garden . Rebecca knew it was a gentle excuse . Josette simply refused to impose it . Even her shipments of fresh fruits and vegetables came via courier , never in person . Yet what Rebecca craved most was that very 1/2 Chapter 38 imposition .

+25 Bonus As a child , her passion for dance had been opposed by her parents to save money . Josette had stepped in , funding her lessons and later covering her high school expenses too . From high school onward , Rebecca boarded at school . Her parents contributed nothing , viewing a girl's education as wasteful . She'd marry into another family anyway . Her beauty and dance skills had Adeline plotting early . Adeline wanted her to date someone rich at 18 and planned to marry her off to benefit Emmett .

When Rebecca aced the university entrance exam , her parents pushed for a local tuition - free teaching program . Following their plan , she would work as a dance teacher upon graduation , earn extra income for the family , and stay homebound . Soren had bluntly declared , " No funds for distant college . Free program or drop out . " Rebecca held no grudge against teaching , but she'd topped the nation's premier dance academy exam . Once again , Josette stepped in , backing her to chase her dreams .

After the accident , her parents lamented only her diminished marriage prospects , scheming for Vance's payout . Comments Support Share +2 2/2

Chapter 37

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Chapter 37 It was Josette who had nursed Rebecca tirelessly in the hospital . Memories cascaded through her mind , including Vance's marriage proposal . Her parents had rejoiced that a disabled daughter could land a golden ticket . They had obsessed over his fortune and thought nothing of her . Only Josette had clasped Rebecca's hand , whispering , " No matter what , always love yourself most . " She had foreseen the mismatch but couldn't halt it . Gazing out the cab window , Rebecca's eyes stung . " I'm sorry , Grandma . I didn't love myself well . " By arrival , night had fallen .

Josette's house glowed with warm lights , a beacon soothing Rebecca's weary heart . Tears welled unbidden . She got out of the cab , crossed the yard , and knocked . " Who is it ? " Josette asked , approaching the door . Upon seeing Rebecca , her eyes sparkled with joy . " Becky ? What brings you here ? " Rebecca's eyes burned anew . Fearing tears might alarm Josette , Rebecca enveloped her in a hug , whining playfully , " Grandma , I saw the grapes you sent , and I missed you so much . " " You silly girl . " Josette beamed , glancing behind her and noting Vance's absence . " You came alone ?

" " Yeah ! Vance is busy , so I came by myself , " Rebecca lied , linking arms as they entered . " Grandma , I'm starving . Got anything to eat ? " " What would you like ? " Josette chuckled . " Your pasta with meat sauce , " she replied . In her twenty - something years , only with Josette could she speak so freely . " Coming right up . " Josette bustled to the kitchen happily . Rebecca spotted some photos on the TV cabinet - four in total . One was a portrait of her grandparents , her parents , and her brother . Another captured her childhood dance award . A third honored her late aunt .

The last one featured her , Vance , and Josette . This photo dated back four years . The town head had called about Josette's fall , and she had rushed over with cash . Vance had accompanied her , helping transport Josette to the hospital . That experience had solidified her resolve to make the marriage work , despite Vance's detachment. Later , she learned the town head had first contacted Soren , who dismissed it at a poker game , suggesting a local clinic .

1/2 Chapter 37 +25 Bonus Vance could have delegated or wired funds , but he personally joined her in the countryside , even carrying Josette . Post - discharge , Rebecca snapped this selfie , sending it to Josette , who framed it lovingly . " All done . Come eat your pasta ! " Josette beamed , setting down the food . " Still craving the same as when you were little . " Rebecca inhaled the savory aroma and devoured it ravenously . She was famished , having barely eaten at her parents ' . In moments , the plate was empty . Only then did Josette ask gently , " Had a fight with him ?

Chapter 38

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Chapter 38 Rebecca smiled wryly . From someone who truly cared , nothing stayed hidden . " Grandma . " Rebecca linked arms with Josette , leaning on her shoulder . " I want to go back to school . What do you think ? " Josette was her only confidante now . " That's wonderful ! I've saved some money , so don't worry , " Josette exclaimed . Rebecca's eyes misted as she hugged Josette's waist . " I have money now , Grandma . " Only Josette offered such unwavering support . " Your money's yours , and I've saved some for you , " Josette said , stroking her hair tenderly . " Grandma ...

" Rebecca basked in the affection , though worry gnawed at her . " But if I go , it could be years . What if I miss you terribly ? " " Silly girl , video call whenever you miss me , " Josette reassured her . " I'm young at heart - staying right here . I'll wait for you to finish and return . If you settle abroad , I'll join you , as long as I'm not a burden . " " Never , " Rebecca said quickly . " I'll take you everywhere . We'll travel the world together . " " Sounds perfect . " Josette held her close , patting her back like in childhood .

" I'll be waiting for that adventure . " They shared the bed , rain pattering midway through the night . Rebecca suddenly understood why she always slept so soundly to the rhythm of rain . Childhood rainy nights meant sharing with Josette , who patted her gently while weaving tales . The rain's rhythm , blended with Josette's soothing voice , always lulled her . Josette asked no more about Vance or their quarrels , but Rebecca sensed she understood implicitly . She slumbered peacefully until late morning , undisturbed by alarms . Her phone , uncharged overnight , had been out of power .

Yet she felt no urgency to revive it . This disconnection from the world was blissfully freeing . Post - rain , the sky was clear . The air carried a moist , earthy freshness unique to the countryside . Josette was absent , likely fetching breakfast . Rebecca got out of bed , stepped into the yard , and inhaled deeply . The sunroom stood empty , except for the barre . It was her old practice spot , untouched for five years , and she presumed it housed clutter now . No longer shunning memories , she approached and opened the door , only to freeze .

1/2 Chapter 38 +25 Bonus Spotless and bare , the place mirrored its state from five years ago . Touching the barre yielded no dust , meaning Josette had cleaned it daily . The glass enclosure , with its high ceiling for flips , had been custom - built for her training . Irresistibly , she drew back the curtains , inviting sunlight to flood in . At the barre , muscle memory surged like a tidal wave . Finally , she hoisted her injured leg onto it . A profound , soul - deep resonance vibrated through her . Tears brimming , she pressed downward .

Chapter 39

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Some pursuits , once abandoned , proved impossible to reclaim . Rebecca lost count of her tumbles , unable to recapture her former spins and leaps . Another fall brought excruciating pain ; she collapsed , sweat and tears mingling on her face . She surrendered , knowing it was futile . The doctors had declared dancing impossible five years ago . Now her body was as rigid as bamboo , making revival a distant dream . Sensing a presence outside , she looked up . Josette stood beyond the glass with a man who seemed to be Desmond . How had they connected ?

And had he witnessed her pathetic display ? Panic surged , and the mocking laughter of Vance's friends echoed in her mind . " She used to dance , but now she's crippled . What's the difference from being useless ? " " What can she do for you ? Can't socialize ; might spill tea at home ? Vance , water ... Like that , right ? " " Vance , water . Ah , I fell . Hold me . " Terrified , she scrambled to the window , yanking curtains shut in desperation . Huddled behind them , she clamped a hand over her mouth , stifling sobs . 1 " Becky ? " Josette called from the door . " No ! Grandma !

Don't come in , please ! " She strained to steady her voice, concealing the tremor . Tears cascaded regardless . She couldn't bear Josette seeing her vulnerability , nor an outsider witnessing her degradation . But the door creaked open anyway . Sunlight silhouetted the intruder , stretching their shadow long across the floor . Sitting crumpled , Rebecca shook her head through tears . " Don't come closer ! You need to leave - just go ! " Desmond ignored her warning , striding forward . Placing his phone on the floor , he extended a hand . " What are you doing ? Get out !

" She curled defensively , arms shielding her body . Without a word , he lifted her gently . Music emanated from his phone : Butterfly Lovers . Instinct took over . Supported by his strength , her body unfurled naturally , her arms and legs fluttering like wings . Butterfly Lovers was a duet she had once performed at school and won an award for . Though her leg faltered , the choreography was etched eternally in her muscles . With his steadying presence , she navigated the dance clumsily to its end - her first completion in five 1/2 Chapter 39 +25 Bonus years .

As the melody faded , she stood centered in the room , dazed as if dreaming . " Dancing is a state of mind . As long as you want to dance , you can take flight , " Desmond said , his eyes shining brightly . " Sounds familiar ? " It clicked that he was her junior partner in that duet , the one who'd struggled with lifts , dropping her repeatedly . Beneath a tree , in his despair , she'd offered those exact words .

Chapter 40

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To Rebecca's astonishment , Desmond was Josette's student . He'd arrived for a volunteer performance at the local elementary school and bumped into Josette post- arrival , chatting as they walked home . He'd witnessed her attempted dance . The boy who'd once

wept in frustration under a tree now lifted her effortlessly and echoed her own encouragement back at her . With another show that afternoon , he stayed briefly for water before departing , promising to return for dinner . Rebecca's rekindled dance passion kept her restless in the sunroom all afternoon .

She tackled basic routines , but fatigue set in quickly , forcing her to rest on the floor repeatedly . This cycle consumed the hours until Desmond returned , finding her breathless and sweaty after another session . He entered briskly , greeting her and sitting cross - legged opposite her . " Performance a hit ? You look thrilled ," she noted , his eyes outshining the sunset . He grinned . " Yes , but that's not the reason ." Sensing his direction , she quietly waited for him to continue . " I felt life stirring anew ." His eyes sparkled . She blinked , confused by his words .

He spread his arms and danced lightly . " The sound of a butterfly emerging from its cocoon ." He meant her return to dance . But did her flailing qualify ? Even a moth would have moved with more grace . " Don't be hard on yourself ," he encouraged . " Five years without practice , you were amazing today . It was beautiful . Don't believe me ? I'll send you the video ." He pulled out his phone and shared it in their chat . It turned out to be a recording of their duet . She shrugged . " My phone is not here ." He handed it over . " Watch mine then .

" Viewing the footage , she smiled bitterly . How had the once - celebrated Swallow devolved into this travesty ? " It was beautiful . You're forever the most graceful butterfly . Flaws aside , emergence brings new wings , " he encouraged . His words , though not fully absolving her self - critique , aligned with her resolve . She would grow new 1/2 Chapter 40 +25 Bonus wings ; her life didn't have to hinge solely on dance . She sat by the window , the setting sun casting a golden hue over her face and illuminating her smile . Vance entered then , captivated by her luminous expression .

Noting their heads bent together over the phone , amid the glass room's dance relics and her practice attire , he tightened his jaw . In five years of marriage , he'd never entered this space . It had remained closed , and he had thought it was storage . Now , as he surveyed the barre and mirrors , his mood soured further . Rebecca sensed an oppressive shift , glancing up . Vance stood backlit , still in yesterday's clothes . That meant he hadn't returned home all night . His shirt hadn't even been changed . Perhaps he had been too busy taking care of Catherine .

His face bore signs of fatigue and irritation , and his hair was a bit messy . As he approached , the sunset blazed behind him , mirroring the fury igniting in his eyes . His voice simmered with restrained anger . " I've called you all day . Is your phone off ? " She couldn't fathom his ire . Hadn't he been occupied ? Why expect her availability ? She'd overlooked his time with Catherine , so what made him think he could snap at her ? " Oh , I didn't think you'd call ," she replied coolly , fixating on the sunset . She couldn't tell what was burning her eyes .

The glare or the lipstick stains on his collar and neck . Ruby

