

# **Lost Me, Gained Regret (Jane and Bryant Ferguson)**

## **Chapter 191**

I was stunned by his audacity.

Yes, I wouldn't lie. I had a thing for Bryant once. But what made him think I'd stand there waiting, always ready to pick him over anyone else?

Trying to twist my wrist free from his grip and failing, I spelled it out, "I don't want to. Bryant, let go of me!"

The light cascaded down from above, deepening the shadows around his eyes while his tone was as frosty as a winter morning. "Good for you. You've come into your own."

Yet, the next thing I knew was that Bryant had shoved me into the car and slammed the door shut. Ignoring my attempts to open the door, he had it locked tight.

Outside, two towering figures stood with an air of imminent conflict, like a storm about to break.

Fearing a brawl, I had no idea what Bryant said, but with just a few words, Mark backed down, his posture deflating with a mix of anger and restraint.

Bryant opened the car door and pushed me inside before climbing in himself. That was when I heard Mark say in a calm and measured tone, "Mr. Ferguson, it seems like you're running out of chips to play." With a loud slam, Bryant closed the door, his clenched jaw betraying his fury.

Mark had easily provoked him.

"Drive!" Bryant barked.

I moved to the other side, fiddling with the lock, which wouldn't budge. "I want to get out!"

Meanwhile, the driver had started the car and smoothly exited the parking lot.

Bryant leaned back, eyes closed, feigning rest as if he hadn't heard a word I said. But I couldn't just sit there. I managed to pry the door handle open and attempted to jump out, only to be yanked back inside as Bryant reached over me to close the door again.

The car screeched to a halt!

Barely steadying myself, I met his gaze, icy and mocking. "So eager to go back to him?"

His thinking was lost on me. "I want to go home!" I shouted.

"Is it home you're going to, or to him?"

"Bryant, are you deaf?" I couldn't help but laugh in frustration, staring him down. "Even if I was going to him, what's it to you? You have no say!"

His voice was cold as he asked, "Where were you this morning?"

"None of your damn business!" I pushed him away, desperate to leave the car.

He grabbed my wrist, unyielding, and leaned in closer, his eyes narrowing. "Feeling guilty, are you?"

I rolled my eyes. "Why should I feel guilty?"

"Jane, you and the Larsons have been getting quite chummy. What's next, planning to marry Mark?" he pressed, his voice heavy.

I paused, and it clicked. "You had someone follow me?"

Only Mark, Kathy, and I knew about my visit to the Larson family that morning!

Bryant's eyes narrowed further, countering my accusation with another question. "Haven't I warned you? Things in the Larson family are complicated. Mark has barely been back, and he's practically overshadowing Violet. Do you think he's that simple?"

"What? That's..." His words confused me before I gathered my thoughts, "That has nothing to do with me."

Mark hadn't kept anything from me. He had even told me about his return to the Larson family. After all, the Larson family had wronged him and his mother. He was merely reclaiming what was rightfully his.

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I looked toward Bryant, adding, "And even if he's a tricky guy, if I get played and still feel grateful, it's none of your business."

"As long as we're not signing those divorce papers, everything about you is my business!" He seemed almost amused by his anger, his tongue flicking against his cheek, "Jane, don't even think about making me cuckolded."

With a calm command, Bryant instructed the driver, "Drive! Back to the Ferguson Mansion!"

I was baffled, staring wide-eyed at him. "What are you trying to do?"

"Until those divorce papers are in hand, forget about seeing Mark in secret!" His tone left no room for argument, and I was nearly driven to madness, struggling fiercely. "What right do you have to control my life?"

He remained unmoved. "Because I'm still your husband!"

I took a deep breath, my words laced with sarcasm, "Husband? What a joke! Have you ever believed a word I said?"

Bryant frowned, his gaze deepening, "You mean what happened at the hospital today?"

I snapped, "What else?"

He rubbed his temples, his voice rich and deep, "You're not a child anymore. You should know, even if you call the cops, everything requires evidence."

"Are you a cop or my husband?" I looked at him steadily, asking as calmly as I could.

How could he be so clear-cut, claiming to be my husband on the one hand, yet never trusting me? Could a person be so divided?

Bryant stiffened slightly, his lips pressing together. "But they're not criminals."

I clenched my fists. "They are your lover and future mother-in-law, right?"

Bryant tried to explain, "Jane, listen. Margaret and I..."

"Stop," I smirked, though my eyes were cold. "You doubt my relationship with Mark just as much when I tell you nothing is happening. What about you and Margaret? I bet it wasn't just a one-time sleepover!" Bryant's gaze darkened, his words crystal clear, "You're the only woman for me. I haven't touched anyone else."

I was stunned. My instinct was to argue, but looking at Bryant's expression, it didn't seem like a lie.

I knew pursuing it would lead nowhere, so I turned my head. "What did you say to Mark just now?"

Bryant snorted, "Want to know?"

I admitted, "Yes."

Bryant was unfazed. "I said I could withdraw the divorce application unilaterally."

Anger surged within me, my teeth clenched in fury, "Bryant, you're despicable!"

He was telling me and warning me! As long as I went against his wishes, he could cancel the application, trapping me in this marriage forever.

His eyes were as cold as ice. "I have many more despicable methods. Want to try?"

I stared at him, feeling like I had never known the man before me.

My desire to struggle faded, and my arms fell to my sides. "Why?"

He answered, "To teach you a lesson, to remember who you are. And to remember who your man is."

Suddenly, I understood his motive.

It wasn't out of love. Bryant had never loved me. It was purely a man's possessiveness at play.

Even so, I wasn't ready to give in once we arrived at the Ferguson Mansion. I stepped out of the car and walked away.

Behind me, his voice was cold and deep, "Did you think I'd bring you here just to let you walk away?"

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I had to admit power was quite the commodity. With just a few words from Bryant, I realized I was well and truly trapped. If he wanted, he could have his bodyguards form a literal wall around me, making it impossible for me to leave.

Lips pursed, I decided to turn around, bypassing him with a cold demeanor, and headed straight back to my room. And immediately, I locked the door behind me.

So, he wanted to confine me there? Fine, let him. After all, I was just a loaf at this point.

The Ferguson Mansion lacked nothing. It provided good food, fine wine, and staff at beck and call. At most, I'd just wait out the cooling-off period for the divorce, and I'd be free.

Our room remained untouched. The housekeepers knew Bryant disliked anyone messing with his stuff, so their cleaning was limited to dusting and mopping.

Nothing was ever moved. My slippers, skincare stuff, books by the bed, hair ties, everything was just where I left them.

However, the other half of the bed, Bryant's side, bore the signs of recent use. I was surprised. He stayed in this room and hadn't erased any trace of my existence there.

Knock. Not long after I had finished showering, there was a knock on the door. I didn't move an inch, not wanting to engage.

Soon, Gary's voice came through. "Mrs. Ferguson."

That got me up and heading for the door. "What is it?"

Given Gary's unexpected betrayal, my tone was less than warm.

Gary didn't seem to mind and started awkwardly, "The housekeepers found Mr. Ferguson's clothes soaked in blood. I just checked on him, and his wound is still bleeding. He refuses to see a doctor. Maybe you could try talking to him."

"Margaret can take care of it," I said firmly. "Or Teresa. He's always all ears with them."

"Mrs. Ferguson, Mr. Bryant... cares about you. Mr. Timothy and I have seen it clear as day," Gary implored, voice filled with earnestness. "It's just that you two are too caught up to see it."

At that, a sour twist went through my heart. Did Bryant care about me? That seemed far-fetched, almost like some fantasy.

Looking at Gary, whose hair had visibly greyed since Timothy's passing, I finally relented, "Fine, I'll talk to him. Don't worry. Go get some rest."

Gary had devoted his life to serving Timothy, without a family of his own, all for the Ferguson family. With Timothy gone and Bryant barely managing to keep the business afloat, everything fell on Gary's shoulders.

Bryant was just in the next room. I knocked and heard a calm, "Come in."

Taking a deep breath to compose myself, I entered. At first glance, the room was empty, but a few steps in, I saw Bryant at his desk, engrossed in work. His hair was

damp, his profile sleek and focused. He wore a white bathrobe, tightly stretched across his back, stained with blood seeping through the fabric.

He continued to sift through documents without even looking up. "Gary, I said it's fine. Go to sleep."

"Gary's gone to bed." With a sense of shared burden, I spoke, "He said you're bleeding. I'm calling the family doctor."

The Ferguson family had a team of doctors on call 24/7.

Bryant finally looked up, his gaze dark and unreadable. "There's no need. Scoundrels don't require doctors."

He was always quick to settle scores.

I couldn't be bothered to argue. "Fine, have it your way."

He didn't want it, and I wasn't in any position to insist. He never liked listening to me anyway.

As I turned to leave, his voice stopped me. "Change the dressing for me."

I said coldly, "I'm not a doctor. I don't know how to change bandages and I don't have any medicine."

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"I know how to change bandages, and I've also got medicine." Bryant stood up and walked over, each step pressing down on my heart like a weight. "I'll teach you how to change it." "Well, you might as well do it yourself." With that, I turned to leave.

"Jane." He suddenly grasped mine, his voice gravelly with emotion, "It hurts."

Those two words alone were enough to shatter my defenses. After all, it was a gunshot wound. I couldn't take it lightly.

I eyed him suspiciously. "Bryant, when did I ever miss that you're such a drama king?"

He looked down casually. "So, are you falling for this act?"

"No." I dropped the word and turned to leave, only for him to pull me back forcefully. He lowered his proud head for the first time, his voice softening, "It hurts."

At that moment, I wanted to kick myself. 'Jane, you're such a pushover.'

But thinking of his wound, I couldn't bring myself to be harsh. It was true that feeling sorry for a man would make a woman's life a terrible mess.

"Where's the medicine?" I capitulated.

"On the sofa," his voice was gentle.

When I picked up the bag from the sofa and returned, he was already sitting by the bed, his gaze following my every move.

Opening the bag, I found everything there, including the gauze, iodine, and clotting agents. It was as if everything was ready except for the nurse who would help him.

I looked at him, puzzled. "Were you waiting for Margaret to play nurse?"

'That's unlikely. Margaret's with your father.' I added silently to myself.

Bryant frowned. "Jane, Jane, what use is your brain anyway? Is your head simply there to add a few inches to your height?"

I was no stranger to his sarcasm and didn't bother to argue, stating, "Take off your shirt."

Once he did, I gingerly removed the bandages to find the gruesome wound beneath and felt a sharp pain in my heart. I suddenly wondered why he had so unhesitatingly taken a bullet for me that day. Self-preservation should be human nature, after all.

Without an answer, I could only carefully treat his wound. He taught me how to change the dressing but not utter unnecessary words. But sweat beaded on his forehead.

After wrapping the wound, I couldn't help but ask, "Does it hurt a lot?"

"Do you care?" he asked, his eyes gloomy as midnight, attempting to peer into my soul, seemingly hopeful.

Caught off guard, I averted my gaze, denying, "No."

"Liar." Bryant scrutinized me knowingly, "Every time you lie, you can't meet someone's eyes."

In the end, I almost ran for the hills.

The next day, I woke up late to avoid Bryant at breakfast. He was always busy, leaving early and returning late. If I avoided breakfast with him, he'd be back after I had retired to my room for the night. We wouldn't cross paths, and I just had to wait until I could get the divorce papers.

Unexpectedly, I ran smack into Bryant just as I stepped out of my room.

He was in a meticulously tailored black suit, tall and imposing, with an aura of aloofness and dignity about him. However, his gunshot wound seemed to have worsened, and his back hunched.

I wondered, "Why haven't you left yet?"

He sneered, "Are you that afraid of me?"

"For your information, there's a fundamental difference between fear and disdain." I had barely finished speaking when I saw his expression darken, and suddenly, I felt a burst of exhilaration. Suddenly, a servant hurried upstairs, approaching quickly. "Mr. and Mrs. Ferguson, good morning. Lady Teresa and Miss Margaret have returned."

I frowned at Bryant incredulously. "You allowed this?"

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He didn't even flinch as he frowned. "Do you think I'd look for trouble for no reason?"

That was debatable.

The mere sight of Teresa and Margaret irked me so much that I didn't want to go downstairs. Before I returned to my room, I said, "You better get rid of those two women, or I'm out." Before I could even step through the door, Margaret came rushing up. "Bry, you've got to see this that Jane..."

Her words cut off abruptly as her gaze landed on me.

I didn't want to see Margaret, but since she mentioned me, I faced her, "What about me? Surprisingly, you're so concerned about me now."

"Why are you here? You have some nerve. After the divorce, you are still hanging around the Ferguson Mansion..."

She tried to hide it, but her tone mixed with jealousy and annoyance.



"Margaret!" Bryant snapped, his face like ice, "I don't want to remind you a third time. Jane's still my wife."

I spoke calmly, "We're still missing a divorce certificate. By all accounts, I belong here more than you do. Since you're calling me shameless, what does that make you? Shameless and skinless?"

"Sharp-tongued!" Margaret glared at me, huffing, "Whether it's Bry or Albert, they're the real Fergusons, closest to me! What am I, then?"

Thinking back to what I saw the day before at the hotel, my stomach churned. "I'm not so sure if you and Bry are close. But Albert and you must be pretty close."

At the hotel the day before, they were probably less than an arm's length apart. How could they not be close? My words were both a jab and a probe.

Perhaps feeling guilty, Margaret's face flashed with panic, and she quickly covered it up with anger. "Jane, what do you mean? Are you insinuating something between me and Albert? How could your thoughts be so vile!"

Initially, I only had a vague inkling about Margaret and Albert's relationship. But that moment, she provided the missing clarity, making it obvious.

But then, I wouldn't act without solid evidence.

I frowned briefly and smiled., "What are you talking about? What's vile? Albert adores you, his stepdaughter. What's wrong with saying you two are close..."

Watching her awkward expression, I covered my mouth in feigned shock. "You couldn't possibly think I meant... that kind of relationship, could you? Heavens, how could you think of something so low and against all morals!"

"Jane!" Margaret shouted in anger, but before she could fully lash out, Teresa emerged from the elevator. "Margaret! Why are you speaking to Ms. Webster like that? Getting all worked up over nothing serious, just like a child. You should learn from Ms. Webster how to be more composed and discreet!"

On the surface, Teresa was praising me, but the fact was that she was showing Bryant how innocent Margaret was and how calculating I was.

I wished that when I threw the evidence of Margaret sleeping with her husband in front of her, she could still defend Margaret like that.

I looked at her calmly. "Just woke up yesterday, and you're already bouncing around today. You're in good shape, not like someone who's been in a coma for years."

It was just a casual remark, but Teresa flinched. Could it be that she had woken up earlier? Had Teresa been waiting for the right moment till Bryant felt most indebted to her, and then, she asked for forgiveness for Margaret?

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If that were the case, she was even more terrifying than I had imagined.

Teresa gave a weak smile, her lips still a bit too pale. "It's all thanks to Bry's devotion. Even though I've been bedridden for years, I've been well cared for. And it's precisely because of this, you see, that I felt completely at ease entrusting Margaret to him."

"Oh." I couldn't help but twitch the corner of my mouth, pretending not to catch the hidden meaning in her words. "That's nice."

She had played the other woman herself and then set up her daughter to play the same role. Sadly, her daughter got a taste for it and didn't even spare her marriage. With that, I planned to head back to my

room.

"Ms. Webster." But Teresa stopped me. "We came because Margaret received some rather peculiar photos, and you're involved, too. It wouldn't be right to show them to Bry without you, so please join us." I frowned, sensing it wasn't going to be good news.

With one hand casually in his pocket, Bryant spoke calmly, "Let's go downstairs. Jane must be starving."

Once downstairs, Margaret couldn't wait to speak, but Bryant gave her a chilling glance. "I already mentioned Jane's skipped breakfast. What's the matter so urgent it can't delay a bit?"

With that, he patted my shoulder, signaling me to go and have breakfast.

Margaret pouted, frustrated. "You're still defending her! Wait till you see the photos, and you'll know I was only looking out for you!"

"Enough, Margaret." Experience always has the upper hand. Teresa didn't rush. "Let Ms. Webster have her breakfast first. Bry, you haven't eaten, either. Go on now."

Indeed, my stomach was growling, so I made my way to the dining room.

Gary instructed the staff to serve breakfast. Despite the Ferguson family's wealth, Timothy always frowned upon wastefulness, a tradition maintained at the Ferguson Mansion. Thus, breakfast was for two, including vegetable salad, pancakes, bread, milk, and oatmeal, accompanied by seasonal fruits.

"Do you like it?" Seeing me enjoy the meal, Bryant, sitting nearby, paused and asked with a smile.

I instinctively turned to look at him, glimpsing indulgence in his eyes, and quickly looked away, "Yeah, the chefs here at the Ferguson Mansion are quite skilled."

"Glad you like it." He smiled faintly, his voice soft, "I can have them cook for you every day."

My heart tightened, and I gripped my fork a little harder, maintaining a calm demeanor, "What future is there to speak of? We're getting divorced next month."

"Yeah." He also paused, his emotions unreadable, before responding with a word.

Then, we ate our breakfast in utter silence.

After finishing the last piece of fruit on my plate, I put down my fork and reached for a napkin. "Let's go. Those two women are probably eager to sling some mud my way." Bryant had finished his meal long before me, waiting patiently, albeit reluctantly, "You shouldn't always think the worst of them."

"Bryant, let's make a bet." I smiled, tilting my head to catch the light. "Let's see if they're going to slander me or not."

He cast his gaze downward, and our closeness allowed me to see my reflection mirrored in his eyes. "And the stakes?" he asked. "Hmm..." I pondered and said leisurely, "If I'm right, you pull some strings, and we go get our divorce papers tomorrow." For him, it was merely a phone call away.

His chiseled features froze slightly, his face visibly falling. "Do you want to leave me that badly?"

"Yes!" I looked into his flawlessly handsome face, one I had secretly sketched countless times, and nodded earnestly.

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He shot up from his chair, a storm brewing on his face, and towered over me with a glare that felt like it lasted an eternity. Finally, through gritted teeth, he spat out, "In your dreams!" My temper flared in response, and I abruptly stood, marching toward the living room where the whispering duo of Margaret and Teresa were seated. "Out with it, what's the deal?"

"Bry!" Margaret rose, smugness personified, her gaze skipping past me to land on Bryant as she dropped her bombshell. "You know what? That baby Jane carried might not even be yours."

The air seemed to freeze in that instant.

Rage consumed me, and I was about to let a slap fly her way when Margaret, ever the viper, dodged and shoved an envelope against me.

Her smirk came with scorn. "See for yourself. Let's see how you explain this to Bry!"

The envelope slid down my body to the floor, but before I could pick it up, Bryant was already on it, his fingers visibly tensed as he ripped it open and pulled out several photos.

Just like that, a noticeable change swept over him. What was once a gentle expression was now clouded with the onset of stormy anger.

My heart sank. I hesitated, then reached out to grab the photos, but Bryant pulled them away before my fingers could barely graze them. An icy aura exuded from him, making my hand hang suspended in the air, unable to move.

"Bry, you see!" Margaret smiled, her voice a soft poison, "She's been unfaithful for a long time. That child in her belly was likely Mark's."

I glanced at the photos when Bryant was momentarily distracted and saw it was a shot of a hotel doorway. Indeed, standing there were Mark and I. When did Mark and I ever go to a hotel together? Confusion clouded my mind momentarily, but Margaret's voice sliced through, "Forgot? Room 0312, the hotel you stayed at during your trip to Fraveorland last year. Don't tell me you don't remember at all. If your memory failed you, the finance department still has your expense reports."

Memories came flooding back. I was overseas on a business trip, caught up in a whirlwind of networking events. Overwhelmed by alcohol, I stumbled back to my hotel room, barely conscious. Then Christine called, saying someone would drop off some hangover medicine for me.

I had been too dizzy to see who it was, thanking the mysterious benefactor and quickly shutting the door after receiving the medicine.

Could it have been Mark who delivered it? He had never mentioned that upon returning.

Someone with an agenda had captured that brief moment and saved it for such a time as this.

I calmed my thoughts and spoke evenly, "Just from a snapshot of a hotel entrance, you're already drawing conclusions?"

"What else?" Margaret's words were sharp as knives. "Do we need a bed photo to make it clearer? You would stoop that low, huh? Meeting Mark even when he was abroad, yet you dare claim that child was Bry's!"

"Margaret," Teresa interjected with a feigned attempt to mediate, "Let's hear what Bry has to say. After all, it's a matter of a man's honor. Stirring up drama like this, where does that leave Bry's dignity?" Oh, what a perfect show. One played the angel, the other the devil! But their aim was unified, pinning that unwarranted accusation squarely on me.

My suppressed anger flared, my gaze icy as I turned to Teresa, "Weren't you the one demanding solid evidence at the hospital yesterday? How come when it's about me, we're resorting to speculations based on several photos?"

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"Ms. Webster, it's a different." Teresa was arguing forcibly, yet her tone was soft, "The evidence you brought up yesterday only showed Margaret had touched Timothy's medicine. What does that prove? She just wanted to ensure Timothy took his meds. What do you think can happen when an unmarried man and woman get caught standing at the doorway, being adults and all?"

I grabbed a glass of water from the coffee table and splashed it right in her face, sneering, "Teresa, say one more word, and I assure you, it won't just be water next time."

Playing the devoted daughter in public while sneaking around with her stepfather, Margaret suddenly became frantic, "How dare you treat my mom like this? Have you lost your mind?"

I picked up another glass and drenched her as well. "Say that again?"

Margaret's perfect makeup was ruined, and she looked at me in disbelief. "Jane..."

Not expecting such a bold move from me, Teresa immediately teared up, choking out, "Bry, are you turning your back on us now? We're family. I was legitimately married to your father, and now, you stand by and let her do this to me?"

Bryant's expression darkened, his eyes like the depths of a frigid lake. When he looked at me, a chill ran down my spine. Did he believe them, too?

Suddenly, I wanted to laugh but couldn't. The glass slipped from my hand, shattering on the floor. I stuttered and stepped back.

Then I saw Bryant tear the photos into pieces, his voice cold and firm. "Teresa, I respect you as an elder, but there are things I don't want to say but have to. You might have been bedridden for too long, getting muddled. Yes, you are married to my father, which makes you his family. But Jane is my lawfully wedded wife, my closest one!"

"This idea of turning your back on your own, what kind of logic is that?" He seemed to be fighting to keep his anger in check. His words left not only Teresa and Margaret but also me in shock. They were shocked that Bryant stood by me. And so was I. He had his doubts about me and Mark. With the photos, his suspicions should've deepened.

Yet, he seemed to choose to trust me.

Margaret pointed at me incredulously. "Bry, are you the one who's lost it? Jane's making a fool of you, and you're lashing out at my mom?"

"Jane is my wife." Bryant stood before me, his presence dominating, his voice a warning, "Not just anyone can step on her, Margaret. There's a limit to slinging mud."

"I..." Margaret momentarily hesitated, then played the victim, gesturing towards herself as tears began to roll down her face. "Bryant, you're accusing me of slinging mud? If it weren't for you, my mom and I wouldn't bother with this mess! Fine! Consider us meddlers then!"

Teresa also looked at Bryant, shaking her head. "Bry, you've disappointed me. But it's okay. I understand you're just not ready to accept the truth..."

As they left, I watched their dramatic exit, a chilly smirk playing on my lips. Once they were out, Bryant's icy voice filled the air. "Are you satisfied with this?"

I stiffened, turning to him slowly, my throat tightening, "What do you mean?"

He picked up a piece of the photo that had fallen to the ground, my profile visible. His thumb gently caressed it, his eyes showing an almost sick fixation. "I've made up my mind. I don't need anything else, just you."

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I couldn't see through Bryant.

All I could do was instinctively step back. "What do you mean?"

"Can we not get a divorce? Please?" Bryant clutched my wrist, his fingers tracing my pulse, "From now on, it's only you that I want. No one else matters."

I asked, "Including Teresa and Margaret?"

He said firmly, "Yes."

"Bryant," I sneered, full of disbelief. "Can you even convince yourself of that?"

If it was a sudden epiphany, it was far too late. I hadn't expected him to believe me, but it wasn't enough to make up for the past between us.

His voice was low. "So, you still don't want to remain my wife?"

I looked at him squarely, saying firmly, "Yes, I don't."

If we could go back to before we lost the baby and he made this decision, I might have agreed in a heartbeat. But right then, I couldn't find any reason to say yes.

Was it when he rushed past me to help someone else when I was knocked down? Or was it when the slap he gave me as I miscarried wasn't harsh enough? Our marriage was beyond saving. Bryant was silent for a long while, his grip on my hand tightening until, finally, his eyes cleared, filled with bitter irony. "I could even pretend I never saw these photos. Isn't that enough?"

His words felt like a bucket of ice water poured over me in the dead of winter, chilling me from head to toe, freezing my blood.

I smiled, but tears welled up first, breaking free from his grasp, "So, you never believed me? Bryant, is that what you think of me?"

"Jane..." Suddenly, panic seized his features as he extended a hand towards me.

I dodged, stepping back while shaking my head with a laugh. "In your eyes, I'm someone who'd sleep around. How disgusting! Aren't you repulsed by touching me?"

He looked stunned. "I didn't mean that..."

"Bryant, you jerk!" With that, I turned and ran upstairs, slamming the bedroom door behind me.

I hid in the bathroom, desperately trying not to cry, telling myself not to cry over him anymore. But the tears wouldn't listen, rolling down one after another. Even determined to divorce, I wasn't invulnerable. I was still flesh and blood, capable of feeling pain. How could he insult me like this? Eight years of love and devotion, only to end up in this painful tragedy.

After that incident, Bryant and I seemed to have reached some unspoken agreement. In the next several days, he had left before I woke up and only returned after I had gone to bed. We barely saw each other, making it less painful.

Mark did message me a few times, checking if I was okay.

Bryant could be obsessively stubborn, and with their relationship already strained, I didn't want to worsen things. Besides, there was no need to drag Mark further into this mess. I assured Mark I was okay and told him not to worry.

That night, after I had finished washing up and was half-lying in bed reading, I suddenly heard a flurry of anxious voices downstairs.

Instinctively preparing to check, I barely opened the door when I heard Gary nearly pleading, "Even if you don't care about your health, think about Mr. Timothy. What will happen to the Ferguson family if you collapse?"

Only Bryant and I warranted such respect from Gary in the vast Ferguson Mansion.

I paused, feeling a tug at my heart, which quickly settled, thinking Bryant was nearly thirty and should know better than to neglect his health.

Right. With that thought, I closed the door again.

Just before it shut, I heard Bryant's hoarse voice. "It's nothing serious. Call the doctor over, will you?"

## Chapter 200

I flopped back onto the bed to read, but after some time, I realized I was holding the book upside down. A restless feeling started creeping up on me. I couldn't help but wonder about Bryant's condition. If it was



because of that gunshot, it should have been me, not him.

With my thoughts in turmoil, I closed the book and decided to get some fresh air on the balcony. Then, there was a knock on the door, followed by Gary's voice, "Mrs. Ferguson."

My steps quickened as I opened the door. "Gary, how's Bryant? Is he okay?"

Gary said, "Mr. Bryant's got a fever."

I let out a sigh of relief, thinking it was just a cold, but then Gary added, "It's the gunshot wound from the other day. It got infected. Mr. Bryant won't let anyone touch him and refuses to take his medicine." "You're getting a divorce, and I shouldn't even be here, but he's been calling out for you in his sleep," Gary confessed.

My heart squeezed at those words. "I'll go see Bryant."

It was the least I could do.

Bryant's cheeks flushed with an unnatural pink, his breathing steady, but his brows furrowed as if troubled by a weighty concern.

Gary pointed to the medicine on the nightstand. "The doctor just prescribed these. They should help with the fever and infection."

I nodded. "Okay."

Gary said respectfully, "I'll leave you two alone then. Call if you need anything."

Once Gary left, it was just Bryant and me. I reached out to feel his forehead. It was burning.

As I was about to pull my hand away, he caught it, murmuring in a low voice, "Honey, Jane... why do you want a divorce? Please, don't leave me."

The room fell silent, each word piercing through the quiet and straight into my heart.

I stood there for a long while before gently patting his face. "Bryant, wake up. You need to take your medicine."

He barely opened his eyes and seemed to disbelieve upon seeing me. Suddenly, with a strong pull, he drew me into his embrace, his voice filled with regret. "I'm sorry, Jane. I've let you down. You're right. I've been a complete jerk."

His sudden movement caught me off guard, but luckily, I had avoided putting pressure on his wound, though I could feel the heat emanating from his body.

He was delirious with a fever. He would never have such clarity if he were in his right mind.

Irritated yet resigned, I pushed back on the bed, trying to free myself from his grip. "Then make it easy and divorce me. Stop wasting my time."

"I don't want to." His arms still encircled my waist, but his eyes slowly closed again, his voice fading.

Feverish as he was, Bryant acted like he was drunk.

Frustrated, I pried his hands off and stepped back, but then I noticed something that made my heart skip a beat.

On the inside of his wrist were several burns, a mix of fresh and old wounds stark against his otherwise flawless skin. Those were not accidents. With his status, no one but he would dare to inflict such harm.

I tried to clear my vision, pressing my fingers against the corners of my eyes to hold back the tears, and gently tapped his face again. "Bryant, your hands... how did they get like this?"

"Hmm?" He mumbled in response, barely awake.

I leaned closer. "How did you get that burn on your hand?"

In his semi-conscious state, his brows knitted together as if trying to recall, then relaxed. "I missed Jane... the pain goes away with the burn."