

Lost Me, Gained Regret (Jane and Bryant Ferguson)

Chapter 241

Gregory left the words, giving me a look. "What are you waiting for? Let's go."

"Okay."

He was tall with long legs, and his strides were wide. I struggled to keep up, hampered by the hem of my cocktail dress.

A forceful grip caught my wrist from behind as we were about to leave the hotel. "Jane!"

I stopped, turning to face Bryant, his expression cold and forbidding. Calming my emotions, I asked softly, "What's wrong?"

"What do you want, Mr. Ferguson?" Gregory turned, an eyebrow quirked in question.

Bryant's eyes were filled with a stormy gloom. "Interfering in marital affairs now, Mr. Ford?"

"No interest in that." Gregory chuckled, "Just a friendly reminder, Mr. Ferguson, bigamy is against the law."

Ignoring the comment, Bryant pulled me away without another word.

Gregory's brows furrowed slightly. "I'll wait for you in the car."

At that, Bryant's grip on my wrist tightened, and he quickened his pace. He dragged me to a deserted area, slamming me against a wall. His eyes, deep and cold, suddenly flared with anger. "You're close to Gregory?"

It was an outright accusation.

The impact against the wall sent a sharp pain across my shoulder blades, and I retorted, anger flaring, "What's it to you?"

If I hadn't mistaken it, we were nothing more than a signature away from divorce. All I wanted was a clean break. I didn't want to pry whether Bryant was with Margaret or Dorothy. And I certainly didn't want him meddling in my life.

His words came out as if squeezed through clenched teeth. "It doesn't concern me? I can't be indifferent like you!"

I almost laughed. "What do you mean?"

"Jane..." Bryant's voice softened, his forehead resting against mine. His voice, usually so deep and captivating, carried bitterness. "You seem to have stopped being jealous."

There was disappointment, a hint of desolation. After loving this man deeply for over eight years, seeing him like this stirred something inside me.

I turned my head away, a bitter smile on my lips. "Indeed, I'm not anymore."

I had been jealous of his interactions with Margaret countless times before. But as he repeatedly favored and chose anyone but me, I became numb.

I couldn't even pinpoint when it happened. Was it when Bryant gave the promotion to Margaret that should have been mine? Was it their playful bickering? Or when he sent me to the ultrasound appointment alone for Margaret? Or the countless times he broke his promises? Or perhaps when he ran to someone else when I was most vulnerable.

When I lost our child, he was by someone else's side, blaming and yelling at me. My carefully guarded affection faded more each time until it was all gone. I was suddenly grateful he never chose me. It allowed my heart to rest.

Bryant's hand on my shoulder gradually slid down, ending with a simple assurance, "There's nothing between Dorothy and me."

I lowered my gaze, trying to sound nonchalant. "It's okay. You don't need to explain to me."

The time for his assurances was long gone.

His expression emptied, as if something within him shattered, "You... don't care anymore?"

I said, "No, not anymore."

His gaze lingered on me, silent for a long moment before he spoke with clear, stubborn words. "I don't believe it."

Chapter 242

Watching him like that, a swirl of indescribable emotions bubbled inside me. Suddenly, I got the meaning of that saying, "Love declared too late is of no worth."

I pursed my lips. "Believe it or not, it's up to you."

With those words, I didn't give him another glance. I just walked away. I wasn't sure if it was because I didn't want to see him or was afraid to. What he thought of me didn't matter anymore. I just wanted to live my life well. That was all.

But alas, I forgot many things weren't up to us.

As I reached the hotel lobby, I bumped straight into Susan. Oddly enough, I didn't have much affection for Dorothy, but her parents somehow felt familiar, even endearing.

When our eyes met, I offered Susan a smile, but her expression was unreadable, and she gave me a once-over more openly than she had earlier at the party.

I smiled politely. "Mrs. Myers, I'll be on my way."

Her demeanor softened, but her gaze remained distant. "We've met already. You can call me Susan."

My nails dug into my palm, making me uneasy, but I quickly responded, "Okay then. Susan, I really must be going..."

Susan insisted, "Ms. Webster, let's talk for a moment. It won't take long."

"Okay." For some reason, I found it hard to refuse her.

I had a feeling she was here to speak on Dorothy's behalf. I could guess what she would say.

I should've coldly refused and walked away, but I somehow wanted to hear her out.

Susan's initially distant gaze softened. "I've heard you and Bryant have been dragging your feet, not yet filing for divorce?"

It was just as I expected. "Yes..."

Before I could finish, Susan interrupted with a sigh, "Actually, I came to apologize on behalf of Dorothy. We spoiled her too much. She always wants what she wants. Please don't take it to heart."

I shook my head. "It's okay. Bryant and I were heading for divorce with or without Ms. Myers' apology."

"That's good to hear." Susan seemed to breathe a sigh of relief. As I was about to leave, she quickly said, "You and Gregory are just friends, right?"

I answered, "Yes."

She looked at me, probing. "Do you have any thoughts about Greg?"

I wasn't sure what she was getting at, so I was honest. "No. Gregory and I have only met a few times. We're hardly even acquaintances. Besides, I've just gone through a divorce. I'm not in the mindset to think about these things,"

"It's good you think that way." She looked at me contentedly, advising, "Greg's parents, as easygoing as they are and as much as they spoil him, would never allow him to marry a woman who's been married before. You shouldn't harbor such thoughts to avoid suffering later."

A woman who's been married before... Had anyone else said it, I wouldn't have cared, but coming from Susan, it felt like a sting.

My eyes suddenly got red. I looked down, hiding the unexplainable sense of grievance that welled up and nodded with a smile. "Don't worry. I know my place."

Susan said again, "As for your divorce with Bryant, it's best to finalize it sooner to avoid rumors about Dorothy."

Someone entered, bringing a gust of cold wind as the automatic doors opened and closed. Susan wrapped her shawl tighter around her, her words a mix of promise and charity, "If you ever need help from the Myers family, just ask."

"Thanks, but no need!" I took a deep breath and smiled lightly. "The Myers family is too prestigious for me to bother."

With that, I walked straight out of the hotel. But after a few steps, my vision blurred as tears welled up in my eyes.

Chapter 243

It wasn't so much sadness as it was envy. If Mom were still alive, she'd also look out for me.

I murmured in my heart, 'Mom... Oh, how I miss you.'

"What are you blubbering about?" Out of nowhere, from behind a massive pillar in the parking lot, Gregory emerged, frowning at me. "Weren't you all gung-ho about getting that divorce? Can't bear to leave after just a few words exchanged?"

I hastily wiped away my tears, sniffed, and mumbled, "It's not that. The wind's strong out here. Got something in my eye."

"Ah." He saw right through my lie, his sarcasm biting. "For something in your eye, you're quite the crybaby."

What a terrible joke.

Yet, my foul mood lifted a bit. "Didn't you say you'd wait in the car? What are you doing out here?"

"Got stuffy." He dropped those words and wandered ahead.

As we got into the car and the heater kicked in, I suddenly realized how cold I'd been from head to toe. It chilled me to the bone.

The silver Pagani roared to life, merging swiftly onto the main road.

I gathered my thoughts. "What was the real reason you asked me here today?"

At first, I thought maybe he needed a date. Then, it seemed like he was dragging me in as some actress. I wasn't so sure.

In the slow-moving city traffic, with frequent red lights, even a sports car could only stop and go.

Gregory glanced at me. "What do you think?"

"To make me see the truth, to stop me from competing with your dear god-sister, Dorothy, over a man," I said.

"Idiotic. Didn't you say I ruined your plan the other day?" He rested one hand lazily on the window sill, the other on the steering wheel. "I'm giving it back to you now." Hearing that, I understood. Gregory wanted me to see the Myers family's determination to have Bryant as a son-in-law. That way, my divorce from Bryant would speed up.

I glanced at him. "So, should I thank you?"

Gregory smirked. "Sure. Buy me dinner, or give me a nod of thanks. Your choice."

I sighed. "You, of all people, don't seem the type to be so loyal."

Gregory's jaw tensed, and he smiled, "You have a unique way of complimenting people."

"Aren't you worried about facing the Myers family like this today?" I asked casually.

Gregory said casually, "What's there to worry about? At most, my dad would yell at me a bit. That wouldn't harm a bit. If he hits me, my granddad will chase him with a cane."

It seemed that wasn't his first rodeo.

I chuckled, about to say something, when he casually lifted his eyelids. "Getting hit doesn't matter. As long as I'm not dead, I would keep mentioning my missing fiancée. Otherwise, she'll truly be gone if we all stop."

I paused, realizing he was talking about the missing Ms. Myers.

I raised an eyebrow. "With you being so devoted, it's funny that Susan still worries your parents think you might do something drastic, like marrying me."

Gregory sighed. "She's a worrywart."

As we spoke, the car entered the River Villa's garage. He parked swiftly, giving me a slight smirk. "And you better not harbor any delusions about me. I could never fall for you."

"Got it, got it. Just get over yourself." I grumbled, exiting the car and heading for the elevator alone.

Once out of the elevator, we went our separate ways. When spotting a cake box at my door, surprise took over. Bending down, I lifted it, peering through the transparent side to see a note inside. "Jane, happy birthday. Wishing you all the best."

Hearing the noise, Gregory turned back to look, his gaze shifting, curiously asking, "A birthday cake? Your birthday's today, too?"

Chapter 244

I wasn't surprised when he asked that question. I nodded, "Yeah."

Gregory glanced at the cheesecake in my hands, and his gaze lifted to meet mine, a scrutinizing look in his eyes. "Did you grow up in RiverCity?"

I paused and realized he was still looking for his long-lost fiancée. Anyone with the slightest resemblance or connection would want to dig deeper.

I admired his two-decade-long search, so my reply was patient and detailed. "No, I grew up in Southaven, quite far from RiverCity and Vista Town."

"Is that so?" He murmured almost imperceptibly, the light in his eyes fading slightly. Yet his gaze remained on me as if he wished to see through me to someone else.

I chuckled lightly. "Looking for a stand-in for your fiancée like the Myers family found a replacement daughter?"

Poor Ms. Myers. But passion died over time. After so many years, it was understandable.

I wondered whether the Myers family still had a place for her if she ever returned.

Gregory's smile widened at my words, but it didn't reach his eyes, his tone casual, "It's just a coincidence."

I smiled. "There must be tens of thousands of people celebrating their birthdays today, and she was so young when she went missing. She probably doesn't remember her birthday." "Yeah." His expression dimmed, responding absent-mindedly, then, out of politeness, "Happy Birthday."

"Thanks to you. It's not that happy, though." I finished. Seeing him fall into a rare silence, I couldn't help but smile, "Just kidding. Want some cheesecake? It's too big for me to finish alone." "No, thanks." He declined softly and turned to head home.

I didn't think much of it. Gregory probably wasn't in the mood to celebrate anyone's birthday other than the missing Ms. Myers' birthday.

I thought I'd be left to eat the cake alone, but I found the lights were all on at home when I opened the door.

With her hair still damp from the shower, Christine emerged from the bathroom, drying her hair with a towel. "You're finally back! I was worried you wouldn't make it before midnight." My heart warmed at her presence. "How come you're here?"

"Well, you spent your last few birthdays with that jerk, and I was absent. Now that you're finally single, I couldn't miss it for the world." She wrapped a towel around her hair and glanced at the cheesecake. "I already bought one. Why did you get another?"

I said, "It wasn't me. I found it on the doorstep. Didn't you hear the doorbell?"

"I must have missed it in the shower," Christine grinned, curious, "Who sent it?"

I was sure. "Must have been Mark."

The note with the cake matched the message he sent me to a tee. Besides him and Christine, no one else would remember.

I set down the cake, thanked Mark over the phone, and headed for a shower. Coming home with makeup still on, I couldn't relax.

After the shower, I felt back to my comfortable self. While drying my hair, I walked to the vanity and took a bunny pendant from the drawer to put it back on. The dress I wore tonight didn't go with the pendant, so I didn't wear it.

"Jane, come make a wish and eat your birthday cake! It's almost midnight." Christine called out from the living room as I finished drying my hair.

When I went out, I saw she had opened both cakes, lit the candles on them, and a plate of biscuits was beside them.

Seeing me, she immediately lit the candles with a lighter. "Quick, make a wish! Two cakes, two wishes."

I sat at the dining table, dutifully clasped my hands, and closed my eyes.

Read Chapter 245

Chapter 245

'Well, I hope I can get Janedream off the ground. And that everyone around me stays safe and sound.' As I opened my eyes, I blew out the candle.

Christine glanced at the clock and grinned. "Phew, just in time. Lucky that we made a wish before midnight."

"So childish." I chuckled, but inside, I felt a warm glow.

Only those who cared about you fussed over a minute or two like that.

I took a bite of the biscuit, grimacing at its saltiness, and looked at Christine. "You made this, didn't you?"

Christine asked, "Does it taste bad?"

I frowned. "It ascends beyond bad."

It was terrible.

"Damn, what is this? No, even pigs would leap out of their pens after eating this." Christine leaned over, took a taste, and immediately spat it out, moving to dispose of it.

I stopped her, taking another bite of the biscuit. "Wasting is shameful, especially since you made it yourself. Didn't burn your hands or anything, did you?"

She was about to shake her head when my phone lit up with a call from Bryant.

I picked up without speaking.

On the other end, his voice came through, deep and slow, "Jane, happy birthday."

I forced a smile. "It's already passed."

He explained, "I was at the hotel last night. Why didn't you mention it? Kevin just reminded me, and I remembered."

"I didn't want to interrupt your celebration with Dorothy." I looked down, "Plus, it's not important."

A birthday, after all, he hadn't cared for the past three years. Being divorced only made it less relevant.

Bryant disagreed. "How can it not be important? Even if we're divorced, just friends, I still have the right to wish you a happy birthday, don't I?"

I fell silent, then suddenly laughed, a bit bitterly. "Have you ever seen friends have to ask for their birthday wishes?"

In the past, whether for birthdays or anniversaries, I always reminded Bryant days in advance, begging for gifts, maintaining that silly sense of ceremony. But it proved that forced affection was never sweet. Those who cared need not reminding, while those who didn't care would never fulfill your expectations no matter how you'd hinted at them.

Bryant was silent for a while, his voice slightly shaky, "I'm sorry."

I lost count of how many times I had heard him say that. I blinked away the sentiment, finally able to speak lightly, "It's okay."

It was okay. Bryant was an ex-husband, after all.

...

Life gradually got back on track, and Christine and I were constantly scouting for office spaces. After discussing, we decided to start with custom orders and online sales, planning to expand offline once we built our reputation and customer trust. So, finding a good location for our office became crucial.

One day, after checking out an office space, I got a call from my lawyer.

"Jane, I returned to RiverCity yesterday. I can take on the divorce cases you mentioned."

"That's great." I smiled, "Could you then swing by the BlessedCare Medical Facility? We can meet at the hospital entrance."

Allen was like a bad penny and was impossible to shake off without a tough lawyer.

When I arrived at the hospital, Thomas walked toward me, and we headed to the wards.

Outside the ward, Allen was sprawled on a bench like a bum, scrambling up as soon as he saw me. He blocked the door, not letting me in.

"Jane." He had this sheepish look, pointing at the two guards at the door, unusually polite, "Come on, we're all family here. What's Mr. Ferguson doing with two bodyguards glued to this spot?"

Chapter 246

Thinking of Cheryl's bruises, I couldn't hide my disdain. "We're not family soon," I said coldly.

"What do you mean by that?" Allen's eyes flickered with a cunning light, then settled on the lawyer beside me. "And who's this? Why did you bring him here?" "He's Thomas, one of the top divorce lawyers in RiverCity." After introducing them, I continued calmly, "This marriage is ending whether you like it or not."

Allen's façade crumbled, and he exploded in rage, leaping up as if to strike me. But the bodyguards were quicker, restraining him in the nick of time!

He was fuming, and his face turned beet red. "Jane, you're so ungrateful! Marrying into the Ferguson family, you think you can treat me like this? Forcing me to divorce your aunt?" I said coldly, "Aunt Cheryl knows whether I'm ungrateful."

The only person who had been kind to me was Aunt Cheryl. Allen had nothing to do with it.

Gritting his teeth, Allen bellowed, "Fine! I'll divorce Cheryl! But I want half of everything. Split down the middle!"

I looked at him, unimpressed. "What assets are you even talking about? Fine, whatever it is, Thomas will sort it out. You can be sure of that."

"I'm not talking about what your aunt and I have!" he shouted.

I frowned. "Then what?"

"Your assets!" He was adamant. "The Ferguson family's fortune. You've got your half, don't you? You give me half of all those assets, and I'll happily sign the divorce papers."

His shamelessness almost made me laugh. "Bryant and I might be getting a divorce, but I won't get half of the Ferguson's assets. If you want them, go talk to Bryant."

"Really?" He started calculating shamelessly. "That car of yours is worth quite a bit, huh? Mr. Ferguson, being the gentleman he is, must've left you a house at least, and over the years, he must've given you plenty of jewelry. I've consulted a lawyer, and they are all your assets. I'm not greedy. Just give me seventy percent of those, and we're good!"

Looking at his vile expression, I took a deep breath to quell my anger. "Who are you to demand my assets?"

I'd never seen such a greedy and shameless person. My Aunt Cheryl was divorcing him, yet he wanted my, the niece's, assets. No doubt, he'd score full marks in shamelessness.

Allen glared at me, spitting venom. "I've put up with you for years. You, not even related by blood, should be grateful!"

"Allen, any debt I owed you, I've paid. Forget the million before, just considering the mess with Lloyd. if it weren't for Bryant, you'd be dead by now." My voice was icy as I continued, "As for the rest, my blood relation is with Aunt Cheryl. She was the one who raised me..."

"Bullshit!" Allen's rage was palpable as he interrupted. "You have no blood relation with her. You're not even a real Webster..."

"Allen!" The door suddenly swung open, and Cheryl's pale face flushed with anger as she glared at Allen. "What nonsense are you spouting? Drunk in broad daylight?"

My mind was still reeling from Allen's unfinished accusation, and I looked at Cheryl, bewildered. "Aunt Cheryl, he said I'm not a Webster?"

"Don't listen to his drunken rambles." Cheryl beckoned me over, leaning against the door frame. "Come in."

I entered, and my mind was heavy with thoughts. "Okay."

"It's just a heated remark. Don't take it to heart." Cheryl observed me closely, her voice filled with care. "You know how your parents felt about you. If you weren't a Webster, would they have risked everything for you?"

Chapter 247

Hearing Cheryl's words, the tension that had been gripping me eased. She was right. Who else but biological parents would go to such lengths?

I helped Cheryl into bed, bending over to tuck her in and asking, "How have you been feeling these days? Any better?"

Cheryl replied, "Much better. The doctor says one more round of chemo, and then I can focus on resting."

"That's good to hear." As I straightened up, Cheryl caught a pendant that had slipped from my collar, carefully tucking it back. "Keep this pendant close. Don't let strangers see it," she advised.

I was confused. "Why?" Why would a piece of jewelry need to be hidden?

Cheryl's eyes flickered as she explained, "It's just... too valuable. I worry it might attract the wrong attention."

I nodded. "Okay, I understand."

The quality of the pendant was rare, even more so than the ones Timothy had prepared for the unborn child. I understood Cheryl's concern.

I called in Thomas, introducing him to Cheryl. "Aunt Cheryl, this is Thomas. He'll be handling your divorce."

"Ms. Webster, good to meet you. Jane already briefed me about your situation on my way up. I'll need to talk to you in detail, though," Thomas got straight to the point.

Cheryl seemed a bit uneasy. "Hello, you look every bit the high-flying lawyer. How do you charge?"

Thomas answered, "Don't worry. Jane and I are friends. It is just a small case for me. I'll handle it free of charge."

I had discussed with Thomas to ease any financial worries Cheryl might have.

Seeing my nod, Cheryl relaxed.

The rest was out of my hands. Leaving the hospital room, I glanced outside, hoping to spot Allen, but found the corridor empty. He was gone. His words still left me feeling uneasy. Back home, I was distracted all afternoon.

When people were furious, they often spoke the truth without realizing it. But as Cheryl said, my parents had been too good to me. How could they not be my biological parents?

Yet, the next moment, I thought of Susan and how she doted on Dorothy. That was no less than a biological daughter.

In my mind, two little voices were arguing. One said yes, the other no.

Eventually, I couldn't resist calling Allen. "Do you have time now? I need to ask you something."

After the afternoon's confrontation, I half-expected him to lash out at me, but he surprisingly agreed readily. "About your origins, right? It's not something easily discussed over the phone. Let's meet." My origins? My heart skipped a beat, a sense of being suspended in midair. "Okay, now?"

"Not now. How about seven tonight..." His voice trailed off as if speaking to someone else, and he continued, "The coffee shop next to the Stellar Club."

Meeting at a coffee shop would seem normal for most, but Allen was a known gambler.

I was puzzled. "A coffee shop?"

He coughed lightly, suddenly sounding impatient. "Yes, come if you want to. I won't wait forever. It's a public place. What, are you scared I might do something to you?" "I'll be there." I agreed.

I realized I couldn't get any answers from Cheryl about my origins. And Allen was my only option.

Chapter 248

The winter days were short, and darkness had enveloped everything when evening rolled around at about six. I arrived at the coffee shop before 6:30. But Allen was already there.

I walked over to him, cutting straight to the chase. "What was all that about at the hospital today?"

Allen lifted his chin slightly. "Take a seat."

"You asked me to come, so here I am. Let's not beat around the bush." I sat down as he suggested.

The previous customer must have bathed in perfume because when I took my seat, the scent was overwhelming, making me scrunch my nose.

Allen began speaking, diverting my attention. "You can't seriously believe you're not your parents' biological child, right?"

"Cut the crap. What did you mean by what you said at the hospital?" I still doubted if it were just a slip of the tongue said in anger. Besides, he wouldn't have insisted on meeting up if it were.

Allen nonchalantly shook his leg, "Just a spur-of-the-moment thing. Are you taking it seriously?"

"Is that so?" I eyed him skeptically.

Just then, a waiter brought over two cups of coffee.

"What else could it be?" Allen pushed one of the cups toward me, "Ordered this for you. Drink up."

Something was off. Allen wasn't usually so generous. Growing up, he'd rant for ages if I took an extra bite of a burger. Why would he buy me coffee?

"I'll pass on the coffee. I'm asking you one more time. Was there no hidden meaning behind your words?" I suddenly stood up, feeling dizzy, and had to support myself on the table. My whole body felt weak. Allen's expression turned odd. "Hmph, there's nothing more to it. What, did you think you'd turn into some heiress?"

"It better be." I took a moment to gather my strength and tried to leave but was enveloped in endless darkness the next second.

When I woke up, I was lying on a large bed, my heart racing as I scrambled to get up, only to find my strength failing me, and then someone pushed me back down.

It was Margaret. She stood there with her arms crossed, a smirk on her face, "Finally awake?"

I looked around. It seemed to be a hotel room. Immediately on guard, I cowered back, "Was this your scheme? Where's Allen?"

Since when were Allen and Margaret on the same side?

"What do you think?" Margaret's cold laugh was with malice, "Jane, did you ever imagine you'd end up in my hands after what you did to me?"

"What did I do to you?" I was confused.

"Stop pretending!" She gritted her teeth, filled with resentment. "That video, who else but you would post it online? And Bry defended you, saying you didn't do it."

I frowned. "I didn't post it."

The whole mess with Gregory has screwed me over. I didn't get the divorce papers. And Margaret was pinning this on me, too.

"It doesn't matter anymore!" Margaret shouted, her face contorted in rage, her red lips as if poisoned, "Bry has turned his back on me. I had a sliver of a chance, and you ruined it! I'll never have the chance to marry into the Ferguson family now, Jane. I despise you! Why? Why do you get to?"

She glared at me with venom. "What makes you better than me? Why did Timothy constantly thwart my attempts to marry into the Ferguson family, yet he was so kind to you? It's not fair, not at all!"

"Bryant and I are getting a divorce." I didn't want to provoke her, so I spoke calmly, "Whether he wants to accept you is between you two. It has nothing to do with me."

Chapter 249

"Divorce?" She chuckled as if she had just heard a joke. "He's been dragging his feet, not wanting to let you go. Do you think I haven't noticed? But it works out for me, too. Otherwise, I wouldn't have been able

to lure you here alone!"

I latched onto a key phrase. "What do you mean?"

"What do I mean?" Her smile was intriguing. "Oh, Jane, you've crossed someone you shouldn't have! Don't be so smug. In the face of power, you and me are like ants, easily crushed by others."

A suspicion formed in my mind, and I probed, "Are you talking about Dorothy?"

I couldn't think of anyone else who had it out for me.

Margaret's gaze flickered, almost too quick to catch, and she looked at me with amusement.

"Do you think I'd tell you?" She leaned in, her voice filled with venom, "I wish you were dead. I wish she could kill you!"

Standing up straight, she added, "Well, I've got things to do. Enjoy your stay!"

After that, she turned on a camera, placed it on the nightstand, and patted my face mockingly. "This time, I'm going to let the whole internet see what you look like in bed!" Then, she walked out.

In desperation, I tried to get up, tumbling and struggling because I could hardly muster any strength, and fell hard to the floor, "Margaret!"

She didn't respond, kept walking, and picked up her phone, speaking respectfully, "Don't worry. By the end, you'll get what you want..."

Her voice trailed off, the door opened, and a man in his thirties with a buzz cut walked in.

My body trembled uncontrollably, and I said coldly, "This is rape. You'll go to jail for this!"

The buzz-cut man sneered as he approached, "A consensual affair, and you call it rape? That's harsh."

I backed away, trying to suppress the rising fear. "Whatever Margaret is paying you, I'll double it. No, ten times more!"

"I came for the money initially, but seeing your face and body, I wouldn't need a dime to enjoy this!" he said, laughing as he picked me up and threw me on the bed, starting to remove his bulky jacket as he moved toward me.

No!

"Wait! You said this should be a mutual agreement!" I took a deep breath, forcing myself to calm down, trying to appear less frightened. "If I keep resisting, you won't enjoy it, either."

His gaze roamed over me, a gleam of excitement in his eyes. "Well, you have a point there. So, how do you want me to please you?"

"Start by helping me take off my clothes."

As soon as I said that, a sparkle appeared in the buzz-cut man's eyes, pleased. "I didn't expect you to be so cooperative!"

"I have no choice. You guys drugged me. I wouldn't let you succeed if I had the strength to escape," I said, feigning weakness.

"Good girl, I'll make you feel good," he said as he leaned to help me out of my cashmere coat, his hands moving to the hem of my sweater, eager to strip it off, his excitement growing.

I seized the moment, grabbed the camera from the nightstand, smashed it against his head with all the strength I could muster, and then ran for the door!

He yelped in pain, his anger fueling a swift chase.

Chapter 250

As I twisted the doorknob, I felt a firm grip on my collar from behind. A menacing voice hissed, "You little tramp! Thought you could fool me, huh? Damn, I'll show you!"

"Please, no!" But no matter how much I struggled, my strength had already been sapped at that moment, leaving me no choice but to be dragged toward the bed. "Does anyone else hear that? Sounds like a couple fighting." Suddenly, the cultured voice of a middle-aged man echoed through the hallway outside.

"Oh, come on, Dad. They're just a couple who checked into a hotel. A little spat is normal. Let's keep moving. I already told the restaurant to start preparing our meal." The man holding me turned livid, finally realizing I had left the door ajar. He threw me to the ground, reaching to shut the door, but someone pushed it open from the outside!

A pair of polished men's shoes came into view, followed by the sight of neatly pressed pants encasing long legs.

Thinking it was the middle-aged man who had spoken earlier, I threw myself toward him, pleading, "Please, save me. I didn't come here with anyone. I don't even know this man!" "Jane?" A familiar, soothing voice sounded above me!

Lifting my head, I locked eyes with Bryant's gloomy gaze and felt relief, though my vision blurred with tears. The next second, I saw Dorothy and her family with him. The man who had spoken was Richard.

Feeling completely humiliated, I stumbled back, blinking back the tears as I used the wall for support to keep my trembling legs from giving way.

Dorothy's mouth dropped in shock as she clung to Susan's arm. "My God, you just got divorced, and you're already in a hotel room with a man?"

Her words seemed to enlighten the buzz-cut man.

Fuming, the buzz-cut man glared at me as if I had deceived him, hurling accusations, "So you're freshly divorced? Lonely and desperate, are you? Looking for a quick fix?"

My hands trembled with the urge to retaliate, but I heard Bryant, his voice cold as ice, instructing Kevin. "Take him away. Make him spill the truth!"

After saying that, Bryant draped his coat around me and effortlessly lifted me into his arms, turning to Richard. "Mr. Myers, I'm afraid dinner will have to wait."

"Understood. Take care of your stuff first." Richard nodded, his gaze lingering on me with a moment of sympathy.

Dorothy tugged at Susan's sleeve, on the verge of tears. "Mommy..."

Concerned about her daughter, Susan glanced coldly at Bryant. "Mr. Ferguson, are you sure about this? Today's dinner is crucial for the partnership between the Myers and Ferguson families." Bryant's gaze was icy as he looked back at Susan. "I'm sorry. My wife comes first."

"You need to think it through. Without the Myers family, the Ferguson Group's mess..."

"Susan, your concern is noted. I'll handle it." With a brisk, determined stride, Bryant carried me away, leaving a trail of tense stares behind us.

He walked quickly, not putting me down until we were in his car.

He examined my disheveled clothes, barely containing his anger. "Did he touch you?"

I shook my head, voice trembling. "Almost."

It was too close for comfort. If it hadn't been for Margaret's hatred, leaving a camera there in hopes of catching something incriminating, I would have had no escape.

Bryant's eyes narrowed dangerously. "Do you know who was behind this?"

I said, "Margaret, but not just her."

His jaw clenched, his gaze turning more threatening. "Who else?"

I hesitated, unsure. I couldn't say for sure if Dorothy or someone else got involved.

With a cold voice, Bryant called Kevin, "Once that guy talks, throw him and Margaret into that room from today!"

"Wouldn't that be..."

I wondered if it was illegal.