

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

## **Chapter 261**

"Ouch." Bryant cried softly in pain.

It was the same trick he pulled last time.

Pointing at his right hand, I said, "You just used that hand to pull me along, and you weren't gentle about it."

"It's only after pulling you that it started hurting," he replied smoothly, going with the flow.

I shoved a piece of apple into his mouth. "Fine, eat up. Have some more."

Later, Kevin brought in a stack of documents. All urgent business from the corporation, the stuff that needed attention as long as Bryant was still breathing.

His right hand was injured, making frequent use impossible, so I flipped through the documents beside him, leaving him to sign them. Momentarily, it felt like we were back to the old respectful days.

"Jane, there's something off about this ROI..." As Bryant leaned over, I bent forward to hand him a new document.

His soft lips unexpectedly met my cheek. We both froze. Even though we had our moments of closeness before, things were different.

A spark of desire lit up in Bryant's eyes, and he instantly pulled me closer, his hand moving to seal my lips with his.

Instinctively, I tried to dodge, but someone beat me to it! There was a thud sounded at the door. Something had hit the floor.

The next second, Teresa's voice rang, "Ms. Myers, please don't overthink this!"

I jumped up, only to see Teresa and Dorothy standing at the doorway, and wondered when they had gotten so close.

Dorothy's normally delicate face was flushed with anger, making her look like a scorned wife who caught her husband cheating.

And Teresa was even more comical, striding over to push me aside, accusing, "Jane, what are you doing? That is no way for an ex-wife to behave!"

Caught off guard by her strength, I stumbled and hit the corner of the bedside table.

Before I could straighten up, Dorothy glared at Bryant, fuming, "Bryant, this is too much! I came here with good intentions only to find this disgusting scene."

Bryant gave her a cold look, his voice icy, "Who asked you to come?"

"It was me. I asked Ms. Myers to come." Playing peacemaker, Teresa said in a motherly tone, "Bry, Ms. Myers heard about your accident and specifically asked me which hospital you were in. She insisted on visiting you. Where else would you find such a caring girl?"

Her words made it clear. She had shifted her support to Dorothy since Margaret was out of the picture.

"Teresa," Bryant looked at her, indifferent and puzzled. "First Margaret, and now Dorothy. Why do you think you have a say in my marriage?"

His words took everyone by surprise, not just Teresa.

"Bry..." Teresa was speechless, tears streaming down her face in frustration. "What's wrong with you? Did Jane say something to you again? I've been nothing but honest with you. Do you not realize that? I'm meddling in your marriage because Jane is not the right match for you..."

"Whether she's the right match is my decision to make." Bryant's statement was definitive. Seeing Teresa's breakdown, he sighed, "Teresa, you're not getting younger. You shouldn't stress yourself too much." The subtext was clear that Bryant wanted Teresa to stay out of it.

Dorothy's eyes blazed with anger, suddenly lashing out, "Jane, you realize all these injuries on Bryant are because of you, right? Are you sure you want to keep dragging him down? Are you sure you want to ruin him and the Ferguson Group?"

## Chapter 262

A few days ago, Susan asked me if I was a good match for Bryant. Then, nothing had happened yet, so I didn't think much of it. But being aggressively questioned by Dorothy, accusing me of holding him back, I hesitated.

After all, Bryant has been injured several times recently, all because of me. The moment that question hit me, I wondered if everything would have been different if Bryant had married Dorothy.

The Myers family was wealthy and influential. Dorothy wouldn't just avoid causing Bryant trouble. She could also significantly boost his endeavors. Their combined strengths could achieve more than I could ever imagine. But with me, it felt like I could hardly help him.

The sharp pain from hitting my lower back against the corner of the cabinet suddenly seemed trivial.

Facing Dorothy's righteous indignation, I was speechless for the first time. Without a prestigious family background, I was a drag on Bryant, a calamity to him. I was the reason he spent hours in the emergency room. I was the reason he lay unconscious in the hospital for two days and a night.

In my silent moment, Bryant suddenly chuckled, his voice cold and detached, "Ms. Myers, you don't love me, do you?"

"I do!" Dorothy's neck stiffened as she insisted, "I do love you, and I won't marry anyone but you!"

"Is that so?" Bryant pulled me closer, his thumb gently caressing the back of my hand. "Do you love me or the idea of marrying into the Ferguson family?"

His deep-set eyes fixed on me, filled with affection. "If I wasn't the head of the Ferguson family, she would still be my wife. And you? Would you still insist on marrying me?"

In just a few words, Bryant tore away the facade of dynastic marriages. I had thought Dorothy genuinely loved Bryant.

But after hearing Bryant's words, Dorothy's frustration turned into rage. "What's the point of such worthless love? I want to marry you, whether for love or a powerful alliance. Doesn't that matter?" "Why don't you go for Mark, then? He's single." Bryant smiled, playing with my hand.

Dorothy was blunt. "He's got a scheming stepmother and a tough grandmother-too complicated. I'd rather he completely took over the Larson family. My family would have to invest a lot in connections and resources. You're more suitable. Timothy is gone, and the Ferguson Group is in your hands. Your dad is only interested in women. Marrying you is like the saying goes, 'a man with a car and a house and no parents to interfere.' You're the best choice."

When hearing that, Teresa's face darkened. Teresa had worked hard to support Dorothy's ascent, only to be dismissed outright, even mentioning the lack of parents as an advantage.

Unable to hold back, Teresa interjected, "Ms. Myers, that's a bit..."

"What's wrong with what I said?" Dorothy frowned, looking down from her high horse, "You're not seriously considering a stepmother as a real mother, are you? Just play the part at home. No need to embarrass us out here."

Embarrassed and red-faced, Teresa looked toward Bryant, hoping he'd defend her.

After all, Bryant had often sided with his stepmother over his wife out of gratitude.

Unexpectedly, Bryant seemed indifferent, merely smiling. "The thing is, Ms. Myers, as perfect as I might be in your eyes, I'm already married."

His tone was casual yet firm. As Bryant spoke, his fingertips traced softly across my palm, sending a pleasant shiver like a feather's touch, electrifying my entire being.

## Chapter 263

Dorothy's face stiffened. "Marriages can end in divorce. You two had plans for that, didn't you?"

Bryant frowned. "Can't you see?"

Dorothy asked in confusion. "See what?"

"I don't want a divorce." His demeanor seemed casual yet filled with earnestness, "And I'm actively wooing my wife back."

I stared at him, completely baffled, unable to tell if he was being sincere or just making up an excuse to push Dorothy away.

Dorothy clenched her teeth in secrecy, a flash of resentment crossing her face, but soon, she laughed confidently. "Bryant, maybe you don't know me well enough since we haven't known each other for long. My parents spoiled me rotten. I've always got whatever I wanted. The more you show your love, the more I want to become Mrs. Ferguson to see how blissful it can be!"

She and Margaret were worlds apart. Margaret still had to put on a facade in public, but Dorothy scorned even that pretense, let alone acting. After all, she had the Myers family to back her up. She didn't need to resort to any fakery.

After her declaration, she strutted out in high heels like a pampered little princess.

Teresa sensed Bryant's distinctly different attitude and hesitated, "Bry..."

"Teresa, have Kevin arrange for a driver to take you home," Bryant said, diverting his gaze and speaking flatly.

Teresa's mouth hung open slightly, and after a moment, she reluctantly left, shooting me a resentful glance on her way out.

I was perplexed. "You seem different toward Teresa. Why?"

"I found out the truth." Bryant smiled, a mix of disappointment and guilt in his eyes, "I couldn't believe what you told me at first, but it involved my mother, so I checked."

I looked at him in surprise. "Then why haven't you..."

"Turned her in?" He suppressed his emotions, eyes slightly narrowed, "Given the current situation of the Ferguson Group, it's not the right time to stir trouble. But there are a thousand ways to solve this issue." I nodded, not saying more. How to deal with Teresa was a matter for the Ferguson family, not me.

I calmed my thoughts and was about to revisit the document he mentioned had issues when he retook my hand.

He looked up at me, his gaze deep. "Honey, I have nothing left but you."

There he was, playing the sympathy card.

I avoided his gaze. "Funny, I've felt that way, too. When you broke your promises, I've tasted what it's like to have nothing left."

I'd got plenty of those.

Bryant squeezed my hand. "You can have more, and you will have a lot more."

"But I've gotten used to having nothing." I took a deep breath, looking at him calmly, "I'm not like Dorothy. She wants what she can't have because she's the darling daughter of the Myers family and always has her wishes fulfilled. But I'm not her. I hardly got what I wanted, so I learned to let go from a young age."

All the trials, the bravery, and the consequences were mine alone to bear. But I forgot, in some ways, Bryant and Dorothy were alike.

He stared at me intently, his lips parting slightly to coax, "It's okay. I'll take the steps toward you. You stay put, waiting for me, and don't back out. Jane, I'm serious. I will make it up to you. I don't want to lose you."

## Chapter 264

I had to admit that Bryant's words had a way of weaving magic, a sweetness that made me momentarily wish I could forget everything that had happened between us. But some wounds were too deep to heal, leaving a scar unmoved.

Like when he didn't come home all night, I never doubted him. I understood he was busy with work for the Ferguson Group. But after everything that had happened, trust didn't come easy anymore. Love couldn't be unconditional or without hesitation. There were always reservations, defensiveness, doubts, and uneasiness.

Even if things seemed to mend, this pattern, if left unchecked, would lead to a breaking point. So, perhaps it was better to cut our losses.

"Bryant, let's not do this. Let's think this through," I pleaded.

"I know you don't believe me, but I'll prove it," he said with a conviction almost like a vow.

I looked away, handing him another document to change the subject. "Here, take a look at this. I'll go get a nurse to check your temperature."

"Kevin," he called out firmly, "Get me some Arnica cream."

Kevin hurried off.

I was puzzled. "Didn't you have your bandages changed? And Arnica? That's for bruises, not for what you have."

He reached to touch a spot on my lower back, pressing gently. "Doesn't that hurt?"

I winced. "You know I hurt myself there, and still, you pressed it?"

Soon enough, Kevin returned with the cream.

I took it, but Bryant watched me closely. "Give it here."

I refused, "I can apply it myself."

"Do you have eyes on the back of your head?" Without waiting for a rebuttal, he took the cream, lifted the hem of my shirt, and gently rubbed it on the bruise. "You're all bruised up but didn't say a word. Do you think you don't have a husband to care for you?"

He had never been so attentive. Before, even if I were all in cuts and bruises, he would remain detached.

The pain from the bruise and the bitter memories tangled together. I suppressed my emotions, a habit formed over three years, "I've been managing on my own all this time."

Bryant was usually low-maintenance, and after his heartfelt words, he became even more cooperative, especially at meal times when he insisted on being fed, claiming his hand hurt too much. But it was at night that he played his trump card.

"I need a shower," he said, looking straight at me.

After being unconscious for two nights, missing a shower was understandable for someone as particular as him.

But I remembered the doctor's advice and shook my head. "The doctor said your wounds can't get wet."

His chest and arm had the worst injuries, and there were also some scrapes on his legs.

He pleaded, hope in his voice, "But I feel uncomfortable, honey."

I was at a loss, no longer bothering to correct his endearment, merely suggesting, "How about Kevin help you with a sponge bath?"

Kevin, waiting to discuss significant matters from the company with Bryant, seemed horrified at the suggestion, laughing awkwardly. "Mrs. Ferguson, please. You're joking, right? If I dare touch Mr. Ferguson, I'll be out of a job tomorrow. It is a task only you can do!"

With that, Kevin made a hasty exit, not even stopping to finish his work discussion.

Bryant looked at me, clearly liking the suggestion. "Sounds good to me."

I knew what he was implying. With Kevin gone, it was just the two of us.

Bryant raised an eyebrow. "Or do you still harbor ill intentions toward me, too scared to even touch me?"

I frowned. "Get over yourself."

He challenged, "Then why the guilt?"

"Shut up." I had to admit that Bryant's provocation worked. I got up, went to the bathroom, prepared warm water, and got a disposable washcloth ready to clean him. We had gotten physical and seen each other naked. It should be nothing to give him a sponge bath.

## Chapter 265

As I was diligently scrubbing his back, completely focused on the task at hand, out of nowhere, he let out a soft sound, "Well..."

I paused my movements, utterly baffled, and turned to look at him.

His eyes were soft, and his voice clear and untroubled as he said, "I admit, I'm the one with impure thoughts."

I was about to say something when my gaze involuntarily drifted downwards, and I noticed he was visibly aroused.

My cheeks flamed with heat, and I threw the towel aside, "Do it yourself!"

Jerk! Even in this state, he still had the energy for such thoughts.

Bryant's injuries were severe, but the doctors at BlessedCare Medical Facility lived up to their reputation. Plus, the care he received in the hospital room was nothing short of excellent. Within a week, the doctor announced he could be discharged.

He added, "Mrs. Ferguson, Mr. Ferguson's speedy recovery owes much to your devoted care. You truly are a model couple! No wonder the internet is filled with stories of Mr. Ferguson doting on his wife. With such a wonderful wife, it's only right to cherish her."

Bryant's smile was one of complete satisfaction.

I found the latter comment rather ironic.



I later heard that the doctor was promoted to Deputy Director that very day.

I didn't say much at the moment, just handed the packed clothes to Kevin, "Take these back to the Ferguson Mansion. They'll know how to handle the laundry."

Kevin took the clothes with a slight nod.

When we got to the garage, Bryant spoke up first, "Let me drive you."

"No need," I pointed towards my car, "I brought mine."

He seemed a bit reluctant, and just when I thought he might insist on having his way, he reined in his emotions and said, "Alright, but drive safely."

"Will do!"

I nodded, relieved, and turned to walk to my car.

Finally, free at last!

Spending a few days in the hospital, no matter how comfortable the room, had been far from restful.

After getting home, taking a shower, and filling my stomach, I collapsed into bed and slept like a log.

The next day, not even Christine's visit could rouse me.

It wasn't until noon when she came into my room to wake me up for lunch that I groggily got up, "Oh, you're here."

"Look at those dark circles."

She spoke with a hint of disdain, "If I didn't know you've been caring for Bryant in the hospital, I'd think you've been out committing crimes."

I yawned, and tears welled up in my eyes, "Taking care of someone sick is no easier than doing crimes."

Although Bryant was relatively easy to care for, given his severe injuries and the continuous fever over several days, I often found myself waking up in the middle of the night to check his forehead. "Go brush your teeth and have lunch. Then you can continue with your caught-up sleep."

As Christine urged me to get up, she cursed, "That damn scoundrel, look what he's turned you into."

The lunch waiting on the table was a meticulously ordered takeout. And it was all my favorite dishes.

I couldn't help but feel touched, "Chris, you're the best."

"Of course, I am." Christine spoke with righteous indignation, "If only Bryant could be half as good to you as I am, then maybe he could start talking about winning his wife back."

I coughed lightly, not daring to bring up the time Bryant cooked at home.

Just after we finished eating, her phone suddenly rang. She lit up at the caller ID, smiled, and answered, "Laura, you busy bee, what's got you calling me out of the blue? Must be good news, right?" Whatever was said on the other end had Christine immediately putting the call on speaker for me to hear.

It was about an investment.

The caller had found us an investor and had arranged a dinner meeting for that evening.

Christine looked at me, seeking my opinion, and then cheerfully said, "What do you mean, am I free? You're going out of your way to connect me, how could I not make time? Of course, I'll be there." "Alright, then it's a date!"

Laura laughed, clearly familiar with Christine, "To be honest, it's hardly a referral. The moment they saw your company's information, they agreed without a second thought."

## Chapter 266

After hanging up the phone, Christine kept sneaking peeks at me like she was hiding something.

"What are you looking at me for?" I asked, puzzled.

"Do you think," she started, her voice laced with suspicion, "the investor Laura's setting us up with could be Bryant?"

"Doubt it."

I shook my head, even though a part of me wasn't so sure. "He just got out of the hospital. I haven't heard him or Kevin talking about anything like this lately."

"Then who could it be?"

Christine was genuinely puzzled.

I didn't have a clue either, so I simply said, "Well, we've already agreed to the dinner. Let's just go and see. RiverCity isn't that large; if it's someone we know, it's bound to come out." "Fair point," Christine agreed.

Later, I changed into a new outfit and grabbed a beige wool coat before heading out to dinner with Christine.

Christine had booked the restaurant. Having navigated the Marketing Department for years, she had a knack for these social gatherings.

When we arrived, a waiter escorted us to a private room.

The room overlooked the river, offering a stunning view of the city lights reflecting off the water. The atmosphere was tranquil and classy, and the menu boasted authentic local cuisine.

Laura was already there. She greeted us warmly, quickly diving into conversation with Christine. "You two are familiar with our guest tonight, right? I've got a big project and I'm really looking to collaborate with their group. Put in a good word for me later okay?"

Christine didn't beat around the bush. "Laura, is it the Ferguson Group?"

"The Ferguson Group?" Laura frowned and gave Christine a playful glare. "Have you lost your mind? You and Ms. Webster just left the Ferguson Group. Why would they want to support a new brand that competes directly with their own?"

So it wasn't the Ferguson Group. And it certainly wasn't Bryant.

I breathed a sigh of relief. If it were him, I'd have no choice but to refuse.

And that would mean missing out on another investment opportunity.

"Well, I overthought it."

Christine, keeping my history with Bryant to herself, raised an eyebrow and probed, "So, spill the beans. Which company is it?"

Laura was surprisingly open. "The RF Group, which just went public on the NYSE last month. Heard of them?"

"RF?"

Christine sounded shocked. "You mean the one that emerged in New York and built a financial empire in just three years? That RF Group?"

Her reminder jogged my memory.

The RF Group was known for its formidable wealth, having built a business empire in a short span, yet its enigmatic boss remained out of the spotlight.

Laura nodded. "Surprising, right?"

"Are you serious? You've got us an investor like that?"

Christine swallowed hard. "Is this restaurant classy enough? Who are we meeting?"

"Their Chief Executive Officer," Laura smiled, then added, "But you've chosen the perfect spot. He's been abroad for years and just returned recently. He'll definitely appreciate the taste of home here in RiverCity."

Knowing who we were about to meet made both Christine and me a bit nervous.

I squeezed Christine's hand. "It's okay. If they agreed to this dinner after seeing our profiles, they must see something in us."

Although the RF Group seemed out of reach, it was worth a shot.

Who knows? Maybe we'd get lucky.

Even if it didn't work out, we had nothing to lose.

Soon, we heard the waiter's voice from outside, "Right this way, please."

Then the door opened, and standing there, besides the waiter, was a tall young man who appeared to be in his late twenties. He had sharp, striking features and a hint of mixed heritage, giving off a sophisticated yet youthful vibe.

## **Chapter 267**

The man was the epitome of politeness, offering a slight bow as he greeted us. "Sorry, I've been away for a while. I didn't realize how crazy the evening rush in RiverCity could be." "No worries at all. We're just glad you could make it!"

Laura stood up to introduce us. "This is the CEO of RF Group, York Carlson. It's a pleasure to have you with us, Mr. Carlson."

I half expected someone of his stature to be a bit standoffish, but he was surprisingly approachable and even took the initiative to refill our drinks.

Christine and I exchanged bewildered looks as he set down the decanter to get down to business. "Investing won't be an issue, but obviously, RF will need a significant stake. I hope you're prepared for that." "We are," I nodded, accepting the fact.

I had done my homework. Founders often ended up with a smaller piece of the pie, but without the capital ourselves, we had little choice.

Christine, with her knack for negotiation, added in good spirits, "Mr. Carlson, we're all from RiverCity here. You've got to leave us enough to live on."

"Ms. Jackson, you've got a sense of humor," he responded, a mix of warmth and age-defying wisdom coloring his tone. "We're looking at a 51% stake. The only catch is, any future financing rounds will need RF's approval."

Fifty-one percent. It was lower than I expected, but it was a delicate balance that tipped the scales of control.

Christine caught on too, "What about the day-to-day management and decision-making?"

"We won't interfere," he assured us.

That promise was a balm to our worries.

With the major concerns of shares and decision-making power addressed, the rest of the negotiations went surprisingly smoothly. All that was left was to wait for RF's contract.

On the ride home, with our driver navigating the streets, Christine leaned on my shoulder, pondering if we'd just hit a jackpot.

"Maybe?" I replied. But something nagged at me, a feeling of unease I couldn't shake.

Replaying the evening's events in my mind, it suddenly clicked. The man, York Carlson, looked familiar.

Yet, for the life of me, I couldn't place where I'd seen him before.

Christine, upon hearing that, teased, "You're overthinking it. He's been everywhere since RF went public last month. It's normal you'd recognize him."

Reassured, I stepped out of the car, only to bump into Gregory just as he was stepping into his apartment. He glanced back at me, a hint of amusement in his eyes, "Had a bit to drink?" "Yeah," I mumbled, my head a bit fuzzy.

Then, remembering something, I rushed inside, grabbed the dress I'd had cleaned and returned it to him. "The dress you lent me for the dinner. It's cleaned. Meant to get it back to you sooner, but our paths never crossed."

Gregory leaned against the doorframe, an unreadable expression on his face. "Been taking care of Bryant?"

## Chapter 268

"How did you know?" I blurted out, instantly feeling a bit foolish for asking.

Given his relationship with Dorothy, it was obvious he would know.

He made no move to take the dress back, so I pushed it towards him again, only to hear him chuckle, "Mrs. Ferguson, you really think I'm that petty? To take a gift back?" "A gift?" I was taken aback.

The dress was expensive, definitely costing a pretty penny.

Gregory crossed his arms, clearly avoiding my attempt to return the dress, and said with a carefree grin, "What, you think I'd let you play my date for free?"

"Fine." I conceded, deciding not to push the issue further and accept the gift.

The price was nothing to him, so if I kept refusing, I'd just seem stuck-up.

I smiled slightly as I said, "Thank you."

"If you really want to thank me, do me a favor."

"Not playing your date again," I immediately said.

Gregory's laugh was filled with amusement. "What are you thinking? I need you to go to RiverCity University this Sunday morning to pick someone up from school. I'm probably going to be busy that day. I'd appreciate it."

I frowned, "A boy or a girl?"

"A girl."

Suddenly, it clicked.

He had mentioned being here to accompany someone studying, and I had thought it was an illegitimate child. But given his age, it wasn't likely he'd have a child in college...

Was it his girlfriend?

When I nodded in agreement, my eyes inadvertently swept over a pair of women's slippers under the hallway cabinet and I smiled, "Alright, I'll do it."

After all, my main focus lately was on negotiating a deal with RF. Once the funds were in, we could really get started. I should be free over the weekend, so taking some time to pick someone up wasn't an issue.

The next day, just as I got out of bed, the doorbell rang.

Once I opened the door, Bryant stepped in wearing a tailor-made suit, comfortably making himself at home and switching to slippers.

He started unpacking a breakfast packed in a thermal box onto the table.

"Made by the chefs at the Ferguson Mansion."

He pulled me over and pushed me into a chair, "Eat up while it's hot. Gary said these are your favorites."

I was still a bit dazed, "Bryant, you've got it all wrong. We're still getting a divorce. You don't need to be this nice to me."

Couples on the brink of divorce didn't need to perform such tender acts.

"You're the one who's got it wrong."

Bryant carefully tied my hair back, making it easier for me to eat, his voice deep and rich, "I've said it before, I'm serious about winning my wife back."

He seemed convinced that if he kept this up, I'd eventually be won over by his efforts. And I knew there was a good chance of that.

I was frustrated, "But I don't need these fleeting gestures. Bryant, why are you suddenly putting in so much effort to win me back? What's the real reason?"

"Is it because there's no one else around you, that's why you want to cling to me?"

"Or is it because you just can't stand to let go?"

Indeed, in the hospital and even now, he had been acting very seriously. Like a husband desperate to win back his wife.

But I was scared!

I had once failed to understand him, and now I didn't want to try anymore.

Bryant's fingers on my neck stiffened momentarily, "Neither."

"Then why?" I laughed bitterly, standing up to face him, "Don't tell me it's because you like me. You need Kevin to remind you of my birthday. Gary has to tell you what I like to eat. So, what about you? How much do you really know about me?"

## Chapter 269

"It's my fault." He said, guilt lacing his tone as he wrapped me in a gentle embrace, his voice filled with remorse and tenderness, "I never truly took the time to understand you before. I saw you as independent, resilient, but never stopped to think from a husband's perspective. To really get to know you, to cherish you."

"But I promise, I'll do better from now on."

Before I could respond or reject him, he quickly added, "I have to head to the office now. Enjoy your breakfast. Let me know if there's anything specific you want to eat, and I'll bring it over tomorrow." "Bry..." Before I could finish, he was gone.

I glanced at the still steaming breakfast on the table and sat down to eat.

After all, wasting food was not an option.

Over the next few days, Bryant became as punctual as clockwork, appearing at my doorstep every morning without fail.

If I didn't open the door, he didn't linger; he just left the food hanging on the door.

Each breakfast was different and came with a sticky note.



"I remember you loved these when we had breakfast at the mansion. I didn't need Gary's reminder."

"The weather forecast predicts snow this Sunday. Want to build a snowman together?"

"When will you let me in?"

"Jane, I miss you."

Holding the sticky note, something inside me softened a bit, only for me to deliberately ignore it.

That day, the doorbell was relentless, signaling his determination to wait until I opened the door. Reluctantly, I did.

"I need to talk to you in person today."

Bryant didn't come in. His gaze was fixed on me as he spoke abruptly, "No matter what happens, you need to trust me, okay?"

An uneasy feeling washed over me, "What do you mean?"

"It's nothing." His cool hand brushed my head as he spoke with gravity, "Just take care of yourself. Don't listen, don't look, don't believe anything else."

I was about to press for answers when his phone rang.

He checked it, his expression darkening. Handing me my breakfast, he said, "I might not be able to come by for a while, but someone will bring your meals. Please, take care of yourself." Then, he answered the call and left with a stern look.

Could it be something to do with Jarrod that was still unresolved?

But whatever it was with Jarrod, it shouldn't make Bryant this cautious.

After breakfast, I browsed the news online but found nothing of note.

Later, I received a message from Gregory.

"Almost pick-up time. Don't forget."

2nd gate, RiverCity University.

He didn't even provide a name or a photo of the person I was supposed to meet.

I messaged back asking for the name, to which he replied, "Just wait for her to find you."

Sighing, I grabbed my car keys and headed out.

As I started the car, ready to leave, a cold blade suddenly pressed against my neck from behind.

My whole body went numb as I slammed on the brakes, "Who are you? How did you get in my car?"

"Drive. Don't stop." The voice was chilling, and though his face was hidden behind my seat, his large build was evident through the rearview mirror.

When I hesitated, the blade pressed closer, causing a slight pain. Through gritted teeth, he ordered, "I said drive! Out of the garage, then down Harmony Street. Keep going." "Don't try anything funny, got it?"

## Chapter 270

My hands clutched the steering wheel so tightly my knuckles turned white. Under the threat of the criminal's blade, fear coursed through my veins.

Even after exiting the parking garage, the knife remained at my throat, barely noticeable yet unmistakably there.

Frozen in place, the fear within me escalated with each passing moment.

I tried to keep my voice steady. "Who sent you?"

The man snorted, "Cut the chatter and keep driving."

His guard was up, making it clear he wasn't to be trifled with.

Suddenly, it clicked. Bryant's warning this morning... it all made sense now.

But neither of us could have anticipated this.

It was the weekend, and traffic was starting to pile up.

After what felt like an eternity, we finally made our way out of the bustling city center along Harmony Street.

The more we ventured into the secluded areas, the more my panic grew.

The only time the man spoke was to command me at intersections, like when we approached a red light and he ordered, "Turn left." Then, amidst the silence, my phone rang, cutting through the tension with a call from Gregory.

Seizing the moment before my captor could react, I answered.

Gregory's voice came through, "Mrs. Ferguson, what's going on? She's been waiting outside for ages and hasn't seen you."

Before I could respond, the blade's edge grazed my skin-a clear warning.

Gregory, puzzled, asked, "Hello? Where are you? Is there a bad signal or something? Jane? Did you even leave your house yet?"

He couldn't finish his sentence before the man, with a swift move of his hand, ended the call.

In a sinister tone, he spat, "I told you, no funny business."

"Sorry, my hand slipped because I'm so nervous," I lied, trying to sound convincing.

He let out a cold laugh, pressing the knife slightly against my neck. "Make another slip, and I might slip too."

A slip that could end my life.

Sweat soaked my back as I resigned myself to driving wherever this madman wanted.

Gregory tried calling again twice, but I dared not answer.

Eventually, we arrived at a large, rundown mansion in an old estate. Driving through the grand entrance, we stopped in front of a dilapidated house, weeds overtaking its garden. As I hit the brakes, another car pulled in behind us.

The man quickly got out and opened my door, snarling, "What are you waiting for? Get out!"

"Okay," I stammered, fumbling with my seatbelt.

Out of the car behind us appeared two familiar faces-Dorothy and Jarrod.

"Jarrod had forced her here too?" I thought.

But then, Dorothy glared at me fiercely and commanded the other thugs in the yard, "What are you waiting for? Throw her down there!"

Without hesitation, two of them grabbed me and threw me into the basement, stirring up clouds of dust that choked me. My hands scraped painfully against the concrete floor. Above, a single incandescent bulb flickered, blurring my vision.

As I tried to get up, the sound of high heels approached, step by step, until-

"Ah!"

Dorothy stepped on my fingers, the pain shooting up my arm, tears springing to my eyes.

Hearing my cry, she seemed even more delighted. Squatting down, she taunted, "Jane, I warned you. Just sign those divorce papers. Why do you insist on clinging to Bryant?"