

Lost Me, Gained Regret (Jane and Bryant Ferguson)

Chapter 281

Mark was feeling a twinge of regret. "So, when we bumped into each other again in college, I was kicking myself for missing out on so many years of your life, for all the tough times you had to go through without me."

"It's not on you," I reassured him.

Back when my life took a downturn, he was just a kid himself.

There are some paths in life you have to walk alone. Nobody can do it for you.

The fact that he was there for me, lending a hand when I needed it most, meant the world to me.

While we were catching up, Christine came out with a big pot of stew, all smiles, "How's the chat going, you two? Ready for some grub?"

Mark was all in, "Fire it up! I missed lunch and I'm starving."

That dinner, with Christine around, was filled with laughter and joy.

Gradually, I let the trending news slip to the back of my mind.

What's past, is past.

The next day, the snow was still falling, the cold wind biting, and the ground was covered in a blanket of white.

Christine had stayed over and nearly jumped with excitement after a phone call, "Jane, how's your injury? Can you make it out today?"

I took a sip of water before I asked, "What's up?"

"The contract with RF came through! They said if we sign now, the funds will be in by lunch!"

"So fast!" I was as thrilled as she was.

Normally, you'd expect a multinational like RF to take a while with contract procedures and fund approvals.

But this was quick!

When we arrived at RF Group's RiverCity office, York Carlson was already there with the contract, waiting in the meeting room.

Seeing us, he apologized with a smile, "Sorry, our branch office isn't set up yet, so the place is a bit basic."

"Mr. Carlson, you're setting up a branch here in RiverCity?" Christine asked, seizing the opportunity.

He was straightforward, handing over the contract while explaining, "It's in the plans. We were going to wait, but some complications have sped up the process."

I felt he was hinting at something but couldn't pin it down. So, I just went through the contract.

Everything seemed fair.

Christine, ever cautious, asked with a smile before I signed, "Mr. Carlson, are you sure the finance department can have the funds in by noon?"

"For special cases, we take special actions," he answered, as relaxed as always.

Christine caught on, "Special cases?"

I was curious too, looking at him.

He paused for a moment, then chuckled, "I see a lot of potential in Janedream. What if you turned to another company because of a delay in funding?"

...

RF Group's efficiency exceeded our expectations.

Just as we were leaving their office after signing the contract, my phone rang.

The funds were in!

Christine was both shocked and delighted. We were about to grab lunch but instantly decided to head to the office building where we'd placed a down payment.

The moment we signed the lease and got the keys, both Christine and I saw the excitement and anticipation in each other's eyes.

We finally had our own company.

Christine was beaming, "Why don't you invite Mark over? Let's celebrate tonight?"

"Sure..."

I was just agreeing when my phone rang again.

My whole body tensed when I saw the caller ID, and I gripped the phone tighter. Answering the call, my voice was cold, "What's up?"

On the other end, the man's voice was distant and cool, as if we had never shared anything, "Are you available this afternoon?"

Standing by the window, letting the cold wind seep into my lungs, I felt chilled to the bone, my tone just as icy.

"What for?"

"To get the divorce papers."

"I'm available."

Chapter 282

Standing outside the city hall, I felt a sense of liberation like never before.

Christine had wanted to stay with me, but I insisted she go on ahead.

After all, I had embarked on this journey alone; it was only fitting I face its conclusion solo as well.

Watching the traffic flow by, observing couples either entering gleefully to tie the knot or exiting with faces devoid of emotion, signaling their union's end, it was easy to tell apart those getting married from those getting divorced.

The breakdown of a relationship is seldom graceful.

Thankfully, Bryant and I didn't have that problem. He was as indifferent to me as I had mistakenly been in love with him for eight years.

What I hadn't expected was for Bryant not to show up alone. He stepped out from a shiny black Mercedes, followed by Dorothy.

He acted as cold and distant as always, like nothing was wrong, just throwing it out there, "Let's go in," with the nonchalance of someone about to grab a burger rather than finalize a divorce.

His habitual indifference was on full display.

"Sure," I murmured, lowering my eyes in agreement.

When Dorothy made to follow us in, Bryant's lips curled into a smile that didn't reach his eyes, his voice dropping a degree colder, "What, afraid I'll trick you with a fake divorce certificate?" "How could you think that of me! It's just... I want to marry you that much!"

Dorothy retorted, before settling back into the car, "Fine then, I'll wait here for you."

The paperwork went smoother than I had anticipated.

Seeing those fresh divorce certificates made me feel truly unburdened, lighter.

I didn't want to linger, extending my hand to ask for my copy, "Hand me mine, please."

Bryant flipped one open, his thumb lightly grazing over my photo, his gaze deepening, "You're doing alright?"

"I'm fine."

Why put on this facade of concern? I snatched the divorce certificate from his hand, "From now on, I'll be even better." I spoke deliberately, as if declaring my newfound freedom. Bryant's sharp features softened slightly, his voice slow as if cautioning, "Good. Take care of yourself."

"Bryant," I couldn't help but confront him, staring into his deep eyes, "the person who helped me eight years ago wasn't you, why keep it a secret?"

"I thought you were in love with him until you told me otherwise."

Bryant's gaze dropped, a self-mocking smile playing on his lips, his voice rough.

"By the time I found out... telling you would've only made you leave sooner, wouldn't it?"

"Don't make it sound like you cared!"

I scoffed, glancing towards the black Mercedes outside, "Best wishes for your wedding!"

With those words, I turned to leave.

"This is all temporary."

His hand caught my arm, his voice low, "I won't marry her. Believe me."

"It doesn't matter!"

I didn't look back, shaking off his grasp, only to see Dorothy approaching.

She strutted past me in her high heels, rushing to Bryant's side, cooing, "Bryant, you couldn't possibly have feelings for her, right? You know I couldn't bear that..." "Three years have passed and the thought of us having a child never even crossed my mind." Bryant interrupted with a scoff, his coldness piercing, "What do you think?" Dorothy seemed more than satisfied with his response, clinging to his arm, "Ms. Webster hasn't even left yet. Aren't you worried she'll be heartbroken hearing this?"

It wasn't until I was in the cab that I noticed the crescent marks my nails had left in my palms.

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I gazed out the car window, feeling a momentary surge of emotion, as if tears were about to pour down like rain. Yet, my face remained dry, my vision crystal clear.

Just as I got back home, the realtor randomly rang me up, telling me someone decided to buy the Riverview Estate property. And they were willing to pay the full asking price without any haggling. They wanted me to meet the buyer to discuss and finalize the deal.

On my way to Riverview Estate, I couldn't help but think, if only this house had found a buyer just a bit sooner, Janedream wouldn't have needed the investment from RF Group. But, it was too late for that. However, having a big company like RF Group as a backer wasn't all bad.

Arriving at Riverview Estate, I was taken aback to see York Carlson standing next to the agent. "Mr. Carlson, it's you... who's interested in this property?"

"Yes, it's me."

He seemed utterly unsurprised, completely at ease. "Ms. Webster, we meet again."

I couldn't help but smile. "What a coincidence. Funding my company at noon and buying my house in the afternoon. Seems like you're really boosting my fortune here?"

"Let's hope I can also boost Janedream's prospects. It's my top investment pick for Q4," he replied, half-jokingly.

Laughing lightly, I got back to the point. "So, you're sure you want to buy this place?"

"Absolutely."

He looked around, a hint of regret in his voice. "This house still looks brand new, and the decor is so refined. Clearly, a lot of care went into it. Why sell it?"

"It was a gift from my ex-husband," I responded freely and openly. "Keeping it feels meaningless. Might as well turn it into cash."

When you're in love, even a single hair from your partner feels special. But once you part ways, even finding their hair on the floor can be annoying. Let alone an entire house. It was a constant reminder of how foolish and ridiculous I once was.

He raised an eyebrow. "Ex-husband? Did he cheat?"

"Something like that," I replied casually.

The story between Bryant and me was too complicated for just a simple answer. Our relationship was strictly professional, no need for deep personal confessions.

He sighed, seemingly trying to offer a defense for men, "Maybe, some actions are just necessary evils."

I couldn't help but laugh at that. "Are you about to say he just made a mistake that any man could make?"

"No, of course not," he quickly changed the subject. "About the house, I'm sure. Let's sign the contract."

"Alright."

After signing the contract, I took one last peek at this house where I'd really put my all into decorating. It was time to let go of both Bryant and the house, to start anew.

But as I was moving on, it seemed not everyone was ready to do the same.

On the official moving day to our new office, before I could even settle in, Christine burst in from another room.

"Damn!" She slammed her tablet down in front of me, bubbling with excitement. "Look at this, are we starting to get lucky? Our shop just went live today, and someone's already placed a big order!"

I glanced at the screen, surprised. "A custom order, no less?"

"Yeah, she contacted me right after placing the order, wanting to design a bespoke engagement dress. She's coming in this afternoon for a consultation and fitting."

Something felt off to me. Our custom designs weren't cheap. The online shop only listed design fees, and clients had to pay extra for materials and other requirements based on their personal needs. A full set could be quite expensive.

For a brand-new, virtually unknown shop with zero advertising, who would be so eager to commission us for a custom design?

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Christine and I circled the thought but couldn't figure out who would do such a good deed.

"Forget it, let's not dwell on it. Opening the doors for business and getting orders is all that matters."

Christine was the optimistic one, stretching languidly as she spoke, "We've got someone coming in for an interview soon. You ready to join me?"

"Sure thing," I agreed without hesitation.

Starting up a new company was a Herculean task with just Christine and me on board. No matter how we stretched the hours, there was always more to be done.

Hiring was top of the agenda.

During the interviews, Christine took the lead with the questions while I played the silent observer, only to confer with her later for the final decision.

The first few candidates were okay, but nothing really stood out.

Until a girl walked in, offering us a slight bow before taking a seat and introducing herself, "Hello, my name is Molly Ford..." Something about her familiar simplicity caught my eye. From time to time, she glanced my way, her eyes gleaming with an earnest brightness.

Christine, amused, asked her, "Do you recognize Ms. Webster here, or do you just find her too stunning?"

"Ms. Webster..." She laughed shyly, then cautiously asked, "Have you ever been to one of Eason's concerts?"

That question triggered my memory instantly!

A smile curled up on my lips, "So it's you!"

The girl who had waited with me outside the concert.

She sprang up, her eyes curving into crescents, nodding vigorously, "Yes, yes, yes, it's me!"

"What's this...?" Christine raised an eyebrow in curiosity, "Where did you find this adorable girl?"

Before I could explain, Molly eagerly shared with Christine, "It was at the last Eason's concert. I didn't have a ticket, and she and her friend gave me their spare ones!" "That sounds like something she would do."

Christine commented, cutting off Molly's flow of words to ask, "I see on your resume you're applying for the position of Design Director's Assistant?"

Our main focus was on design, and we needed an assistant with a good understanding of it, hence the position was specifically Design Director's Assistant, not anything else.

"Yes!"

Molly had that clear and somewhat naive charm unique to college students, extremely likable, "I'm from RiverCity University, majoring in Fashion Design. I was supposed to start an internship this year, but got delayed due to some issues, and here I am now."

I made up my mind on the spot, "You're hired."

She struck a chord with me, and moreover, at the concert, she had shown kindness to a stranger like me, which made me believe she was a good person.

After Linda's episode, I felt character trumped professional ability.

"Really?"

Molly had just sat down but sprang up again at my words, her chair nearly flying back.

Both Christine and I couldn't help but laugh.

Christine liked her too, her eyes twinkling with amusement as she said, "We're still a fledgling company. What made you want to join us so eagerly?"

"Jane gave me her tickets, she must be a really good person..." Molly didn't hide her feelings, "And, my brother also suggested I apply here..."

She paused suddenly, covering her mouth.

I frowned slightly, "Your brother?"

"Yes!" Molly gave me a reassuring smile, eager yet afraid I might change my mind, quickly adding, "My brother, he saw your job posting and thought your company would be a great place to work." I nodded, not dwelling on it further, "We officially open next Monday. You start then."

After setting things straight with Molly, Christine and I wrapped up the interviews and headed back to the office to finalize a few more candidates.

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As for the rest of the hiring, we'd handle it bit by bit.

That afternoon, while I was deeply engrossed in sketching designs for our spring collection, a heated argument outside my office broke my concentration.

One voice was unmistakably familiar, and the other wasn't completely from a stranger.

I had barely cracked open the door when I heard Christine's unmistakable retort, "Don't you get it? I said no, we're not taking your business! Designing a dress for you is beneath Jane's talent!"

"Hmph!" The other party scoffed, dripping with their usual arrogance. "Well, I'm laying it out here. You'll do it whether you want to or not."

Only Dorothy could wield such brazen bullying.

"And what if I refuse?" Christine stood her ground, opening her arms in a gesture of defiance. "Why don't you call the cops? Oh, right, you'll need animal control for that. Don't bother dialing 911 and waste their time."

When it came to verbal sparring, Christine was undefeatable.

Fuming, Dorothy gritted her teeth, "You sure you won't do it? Fine, then I'll make sure your grand opening today is your closing as well..."

"I'll do it!"

I stepped forward, making my presence known.

Her forcing this engagement dress commission on me was just another way to squash any lingering feelings I might have for Bryant, and to humiliate me in the process.

But I was over it.

In the countless moments of despair and disillusionment, I had thought he was the light in my darkness. I was wrong.

If Dorothy's okay with paying, why should I have any issue with the cash?

Besides, she was right. If she chose to be our enemy, Janedream would struggle to survive.

The RF Group wouldn't risk offending a powerful and well-established family for a small fry like us.

Dorothy, donned in a designer outfit, smirked at me, "At least you know what's good for you. Your friend here, not so much!"

I offered a small smile, "She just hasn't mastered the art of animal speak to deal with someone like you."

It took Dorothy a moment to catch on that I was echoing Christine's earlier insinuation, calling her a dog.

She closed her eyes momentarily, letting out a scornful chuckle, "People like you, born to serve me, can only find joy in petty verbal victories." I clenched my fist.

Admittedly, one's birth and the allies they find along the way play huge roles in life.

Her luck in being born into the Myers family, a household whose wealth and power dwarfed that of generations of others, was indeed a boon of its own.

I didn't invite her into my office, choosing to sit down in the shared work area, "So, what kind of dress are you envisioning?"

"I'll have you know my demands aren't easily met. And on the day of my engagement party with Bryant, you must attend, ensuring my dress is flawless..."

She was cut off by a phone call, which she answered with a whine, "Mom, you're downstairs already? I'm stuck in this dump of a company. You wouldn't believe how rude Jane Webster and her friend are, ganging up on me!"

Both Christine and I rolled our eyes in unison.

Christine gritted her teeth, saying, "Why would you agree to take her order?"

"To ensure all our hard work doesn't go to waste and to keep Janedream afloat," I replied with a resigned shrug. "Don't worry, once she's married off, she'll probably leave us alone."

Chapter 286

Susan burst into the office, her chest still heaving slightly from her rush, clearly anxious.

Anyone could see at a glance how much she cared for her daughter, Dorothy.

It was like she was protecting her most precious treasure.

Upon seeing her pillar of support arrive, Dorothy pouted, looking on the verge of tears, "Mom, I felt bad for her because she just got divorced. I came to help out with her business, and she teams up with her friend to call me a dog!"

Susan's brows furrowed, her eyes narrowing in anger as she turned to me, "Jane, don't push your luck! Apologize to my daughter!"

"It's clear the apple doesn't fall far from the tree."

Christine couldn't stand it any longer, "What do you mean, 'bite the hand that feeds' her? Who begged your daughter to patronize our business? I told her we didn't want her order, but she wouldn't leave us alone!"

"And who are you to speak to me?" Susan said disdainfully, her gaze landing on me with a threatening air, "Jane, I let it slide last time for your sake, but if she can't keep her mouth shut today, I'll make sure she disappears from RiverCity."

Christine, who doesn't take well to threats, flared up even more, "You think you're all that...?"

"Chris!" I cut her off sharply, reluctantly speaking up, "Stop, just go back to the office and wait for me!"

I wasn't worried about myself, but I feared for Christine's safety.

The Myers mother-daughter duo, they weren't the most cunning, but certainly vicious, their words made me dare not gamble with Christine's safety.

Christine resisted, "I'll stay here with you..."

"Go wait for me!"

Dorothy had come looking for trouble, and now with Susan joining in, the two of them loved to throw their weight around.

If Christine stayed, she surely wouldn't be able to hold her tongue and would explode.

I forcibly pushed her into the office, despite her protests.

"Jane, they'll bully you!"

"Let them have their moment of fun. It won't cost me a limb."

Before our brand made a name for itself, we'd always be the ones seeking out clients.

There might be even more difficult customers in the future.

If we were not prepared for that, then there was no point in me doing bespoke designs.

For now, it was just practice.

I smiled reassuringly at her, "Just watch from there. If they try anything, you can come out, and I won't stop you."

"But you..." Reluctantly, Christine nodded as she added, "Just keep your distance from them, in case they try something and I can't stop them in time."

"Will do," I agreed without hesitation.

Taking a deep breath, I closed the office door behind her.

I settled back into my seat, looking at Dorothy, "Ms. Myers, can we now discuss what you're looking for in your design?"

"Apologize to Dorothy first!" Susan demanded fiercely, belittling me, "She graciously offered to help your business, and you can't even recognize your place. What, do you think you're Mrs. Ferguson or something?"

"Mrs. Myers." I smiled thinly, "Actually, I don't need your daughter's 'generosity' to help my business. So, how about you leave?"

"That's the thanks I get!"

Susan stood up abruptly, pulling Dorothy by the arm, "Dorothy, let's go! A person like her, what good design can she come up with? I'll contact a top international designer for you..." That was exactly what I wanted.

However, a look of surprise flashed across Dorothy's face as she hesitated, then said in a coy voice, "Mom, I just wanted her to design it, you know? Then Bryant will see how kind I am to his ex-wife, and he'll treat me even better..."

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Was she for real? How kind she was to me?

Her display of generosity couldn't fool me, not after the heart-to-heart she had with Bryant in the hospital room. I remembered every word.

Susan seemed to eat it up, giving her a disapproving tap on the head, "My dear, why is your heart so set on Bryant?"

Dorothy smiled obediently, "He's such a catch. Some people don't appreciate what they have, but I do."

She was mocking me.

I found it amusing but had no desire to get tangled in her web. I wanted to cut to the chase and asked again, "So, can you tell me what you want now?" "Make it luxurious!"

She commanded, laying out her most important requirement, then added, "I want loads of diamonds, real sparklers, with a collar lined with top-tier pearls. It must look expensive at first glance. Oh, and rubies, I adore red..."

By the end, I was almost overwhelmed.

Diamonds, pearls, rubies.

She wasn't asking for a dress; she was asking for a jewelry box.

I couldn't tell if she genuinely liked that style or was just making things difficult on purpose.

I pursed my lips, trying to keep it professional, "Ms. Myers, that might be a bit too much. It's hard to highlight anything when..."

Dorothy scoffed, "Jane, are you jealous?"

I was speechless.

Her attitude was one of spoiled superiority, "Jealous that I can have a dress with a seven-figure budget? Must sting, huh? Too bad! You weren't born into this, without great parents, and now a divorcee..." She was crazy!

I bit back the words that nearly escaped me, "You're sure you want all those elements included?"

"Absolutely!" She lifted her chin with a smug look, "On my engagement day, I have to be the center of attention, no one can outshine me."

Then, turning to Susan, she said, "Mom, I'm right, aren't I? I am your daughter, I can't let you down."

Susan patted her hand affectionately, "My daughter deserves nothing but the best!"

Such a loving mother-daughter moment.

I had no interest in watching this play out any longer, "Alright, I've got it. I'll send the design to your email. If there are any issues, we can adjust it online." I hoped we wouldn't have to meet again.

Dorothy frowned, "Aren't you going to take my measurements?"

"No need. Trust me, it'll fit."

I had already taken them with a few glances.

I didn't want to waste any more time.

Dorothy exploded, "You're just brushing me off, not giving the Myers family the respect we deserve! Mom, look at her..."

"Jane, trying to make a quick buck while cutting corners? You seem to forget you're no longer a rich man's spoiled wife."

Susan's face hardened, a stark contrast to her earlier demeanor, scoffing, "If you can't adjust, maybe it's time you learned a lesson." Clearly, they weren't planning on leaving without making a scene.

From the moment they walked in today, they were looking for a fight.

"Mrs. Myers!" Suddenly, a relaxed voice called from behind.

Gregory strode over with long, confident steps, the very picture of carefree arrogance, "You can't bully her now."

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Seeing him approach, Dorothy quickly masked her usual sharp and spiteful demeanor with a forced calm, though a hint of her temper slipped through as she muttered under her breath, "Always looking out for everyone but your own."

Susan lost a bit of her earlier firmness, simply asking, "Why's that?"

"Well, I promised my grandma I'd get her a few custom outfits."

Gregory couldn't help but chuckle, "I'm bringing Jane over this weekend to get her thoughts. If you've got her all riled up and she gives me the cold shoulder, how am I supposed to explain that to Grandma?" At that, Dorothy's eyebrows shot up in disbelief, "You're taking her to meet Adah?!"

"And what's it to you?" Gregory shot back, his patience clearly wearing thin.

Dorothy scoffed, "Adah has always been big on decorum and reputation. How could she possibly approve of someone... like her?"

"Considering what she's put up with from you, I think she'd love Jane," Gregory retorted, not bothering to spare Dorothy's feelings even in front of Susan.

Holding back her frustration, Susan conceded, "Fine, we'll drop it for now, for your sake."

"Much appreciated."

Gregory's tone was dismissive as he practically showed them out, his indifference enough to grind anyone's gears, yet leaving them powerless to retaliate. Once the

mother-daughter duo was out of earshot, I turned to thank him, "I appreciate it. What brings you here?"

"You owe me three dinners now."

Gregory casually pulled up a chair and slumped into it, "Like I said, I'm here for business."

I was skeptical, "Since when are you so charitable?"

He'd always been a man of profit, never one to make a losing deal.

With a smirk, he teased, "Starting to catch on, are you? You're right, I'm here to propose a business deal."

"And what's that?"

"You'll make a few outfits for my grandma, and in return, you'll owe me a favor."

I frowned, "So, I make the clothes and owe you a favor... How is this a deal?"

It seemed like I was getting the short end of the stick with no real benefit in sight.

Gregory leaned back, stretching out his legs in a relaxed pose, "Mrs. Ferguson, or rather, the former Mrs. Ferguson..."

I cut him off, "I have a name, Jane."

For some reason, he always liked to address me formally, which felt more like mockery coming from him.

"Alright, Jane," he corrected himself nonchalantly, "I'll pay for the custom work, but, you know, those high society ladies in Vista Town love nothing more than to gather around and play their card games with her..."

"I see where you're going with this."

It clicked for me. I got it. Custom work was usually for the high-end folks, and the Ford family was the cream of the crop in Vista Town, a link anyone would die to have.

Having Adah Ford wear something I designed would certainly open doors for me. Still, I eyed him warily, "What's this favor you want?"

After a past event, I had learned to be cautious. Gregory was unpredictable and often operated without clear principles.

"I haven't decided yet."

He shrugged, looking genuinely intrigued by me, "What do you think you have that I would go out of my way to deceive you for?"

I was at a loss for words, pondering for a moment before agreeing, "Alright, I'm in."

Although he was enigmatic, he hadn't done anything to harm me. For a shot at the Vista Town market, it was worth the gamble.

With the deal made, he showed no signs of leaving.

"Are you not going to leave?" I asked, puzzled.

Gregory fiddled with his phone, not looking up, "I'm waiting for you to finish work."

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"Seriously?" I murmured, baffled. "Wait for me to get off work?"

What kind of drama was that?

"A friend dropped me off earlier. I don't have a car." He extended his wrist toward me as he spoke, showing me his watch. "You're about to clock out, too. Mind giving me a lift back?" "I can call you a cab." I pulled out my phone, but he frowned slightly and said, "I never ride with strangers."

I sighed helplessly inside, 'Fine then. Guess the prince has his quirks.'

I had nothing to say. "Then wait here."

I turned and walked into my office, and it wasn't long before Christine sneaked in.

She teased, "What's with the Ford heir hanging around here? Can't seem to leave?"

"Looking for a free ride," I answered, somewhat resigned.

Christine sat across me, leaning her elbows on the desk, her hands propping up her face.

"I noticed the Myers ladies seemed pretty wary of him. Maybe you should try and get on his good side. Could come in handy if you ever need a favor."

"Forget it." I dismissed the idea without a second thought, "Do you honestly think anyone can manipulate him?"

Gregory might appear carefree, but he was sharp. Nobody could fool him.

Christine wagged her finger. "No, no, not like that. I mean, genuine friendship..."

"Get back to work, will you?" I handed her a piece of leftover cake, effectively silencing her, "Pretense doesn't equate to sincerity."

You might fool others, but not Gregory.

"Ah!" Christine mumbled through a mouthful of cake and left. Halfway out, she turned back, rushing to my desk, "Didn't you say it was time someone dealt with Dorothy? I saw her today, looking all fine and dandy."

"I'll look into it." I had nearly forgotten it in the chaos of recent days.

But that didn't mean I would let it slide. An opportunity missed was an opportunity wasted.

When I finished up and looked up again, it was dark outside. Through the office's floor-to-ceiling windows, Gregory was still there, engrossed in his phone, not a trace of impatience.

I didn't take him for the patient type.

I gathered my things and headed out. "Let's go."

He yawned, his patience seemingly worn thin, "About time. With your low efficiency, two clients would keep you busy for a year."

That was so much for a good temperament.

I didn't bother explaining.

Once downstairs, he slid into the passenger seat like it were his car.

I merged into the traffic before finally asking, "Jarrod agreed to do me a favor. Can you check in with him for me? See how it's going?"

Gregory tapped his fingers idly against the window sill, cutting to the chase. "Going after Dorothy, aren't you scared?"

I had hoped to keep him in the dark, but he was already onto it. And quite possibly, he had put a stop to my plans.

I gripped the steering wheel tighter, my tone cold, "Are you planning to protect your god-sister by teaching me a lesson first?"

"Are you always this prickly?" He glanced at me indifferently, "You lash out at anyone who gets close."

I paused, stunned.

The friendship between Gregory's family and the Myers family traced back generations, and his long-lost fiancée was from the Myers family. By all accounts, they were closer to him than I could ever be. Hesitantly, I started, "So you..."

Before I could finish, Susan's call came through!

On the other end, she was livid, "Jane, did you set someone on Dorothy? How dare you, you malicious girl? She's hurt, a young girl, and you've got the nerve!"

Chapter 290

My first reaction was a blank stare, followed by laughter.

'Malicious? Really?' When they kidnapped me, leaving me bruised from head to toe, I didn't see them taking a moment to reflect on their actions.

Just because I had Jarrod give Dorothy a taste of her own medicine, she called me malicious. What a double standard! So, the precious daughter of a millionaire was untouchable, but the average Joe was fair game? Talk about hypocrisy.

"Why the silence? Are you having a guilty conscience? Fine, you started this mess. Don't blame me for finishing it!" Susan was still ranting on the other end of the phone.

The call was connected to the car's Bluetooth, so Gregory heard every word.

I barely parted my lips to speak when Gregory took the lead. "Susan, that's a bit unfair to Ms. Webster. I hitched a ride with her and spent the afternoon at her office. She didn't meet with any shady folks." He neatly detached me from the whole situation with a few well-chosen words.

"Greg?" Susan hesitated, trying to keep her temper in check, "Just because she didn't meet anyone doesn't mean she couldn't have done it. Don't be fooled by her innocent facade!"

Gregory frowned. "So, you've already decided it was her?"

"In all of River City, she's the only one with a motive!" Susan was adamant.

Gregory chuckled lightly. "How's that?"

Carried away by her anger, Susan blurted out, "Dorothy kidnapped her just a while ago, made her life miserable, and even pressured Bryant into divorcing her. How could she not hold a grudge?" "Oh." Gregory nodded slightly, smiling, "Well, if it were indeed her doing, I'd say Dorothy had it coming."

"Greg!" It took a moment for Susan to realize she'd said too much, angrily retorting, "How can you not support your family? When you moved to River City, your parents asked you to look after Dorothy." "Taking a courtesy for the truth?" Gregory's response was indifferent.

Knowing she couldn't win the argument, Susan's frustration grew, turning her anger toward me, "Jane, quit pretending you're innocent when you're up to such nasty stuff! Speak up!"

I replied calmly, "What do you want me to say?"

Susan barked, "Admit it was you who did this today!"

I glanced at the traffic light. "Even if I say it wasn't me, you wouldn't believe me, would you?"

"Of course not! Who else would have a problem with Dorothy?" Susan spat out as if she wished to avenge Dorothy in no time.

I coldly stated, "Then believe what you want to believe."

I'd take it if there were a sliver of a chance to deny it. I didn't have Dorothy's kind of background where I could break the law without breaking a sweat. For me, avoiding trouble whenever possible was the best policy.

Susan paused, suspicious, "Is it you?"

Gregory played the good cop, "Susan, do you think she knows people bold enough to cross the Myers family?"

"That does make sense!" As a firm believer in the might-makes-right philosophy, Susan found Gregory's words comforting. In her eyes, someone like me couldn't stand up to her precious daughter.

She hesitated and warned coldly, "Jane, you better stay in line. If you as much as lay a finger on Dorothy, I'll make your life a living hell!" With that, she hung up.

I looked at Gregory, confused, "Why didn't you just stop Jarrod instead of helping me trick the Myers family?"